

Correspondence and memoranda relating to "Length of Time Required for Obtaining Soviet Tourist Visas in Helsinki and Stockholm, 1964."

Document Number 782-342
for FOIA Review on JUN 1976

ATT. 1 To: XAAZ-22427

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201-289245

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IN THE COURT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SECRET

27 July 1964

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT : Length of Time Required for Obtaining Soviet Tourist Visas in Helsinki and Stockholm, 1964

1. In response to a telephone inquiry concerning the time required (July 1964) for issuance of a Soviet visa for a US businessman, the Soviet consul in Helsinki stated that he could issue a transit visa (valid for 24 hours) in five minutes but that for a longer stay he would need about a week to process a visa application and have Inturist arrange for lodgings. He implied that the main reason for delays in visa issuances was a shortage of hotel space in the USSR.

2. A Finnish travel agency representative said in July 1964 that he is able to obtain Soviet tourist visas for his customers within five days if he pushes the matter.

3. A telephone check with the Soviet consulate in Stockholm in July 1964 revealed that normal visa processing there takes seven days but that this can be shortened to five days "in exceptional cases." The Soviet official receiving the telephone call stated that it was impossible to get a visa within two or three days.

4. A Soviet official in Stockholm indicated in 1964 that visa processing for foreigners wishing to visit the USSR normally takes six to eight days in Stockholm but that visas for Swedish businessmen and other personalities of special interest (not defined) can be processed directly by the Soviet embassy in Stockholm without referral to Moscow.

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782-342

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*Based on cable inquiries to
Stock & Helsinki*

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Inturist*

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1. In response to a telephone call from the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm on July 19, 1964, for issuance of a Soviet visa for a US businessman, the Soviet Consul in Stockholm stated that he could issue a tourist visa (valid for 30 days) in five minutes but that for a longer stay he would need about a week to process a visa application and have immediate arrangements for lodgings. He implied that the main reason for delays in visa issuance was a shortage of hotel space in the USSR.

2. A Finnish travel agency representative said in July 1964 that he is able to obtain Soviet tourist visas for his customers within five days if he handles the matter.

3. A telephone check with the Soviet consulate in Stockholm in July 1964 revealed that normal visa processing there takes seven days but that this can be shortened to five days "in exceptional cases." The Soviet official receiving the telephone call stated that it was impossible to get a visa within two or three days.

4. A Soviet official in Stockholm indicated in 1964 that visa processing for foreigners wishing to visit the USSR normally takes six to eight days in Stockholm but that cases for Swedish businessmen and other personalities or special interest (not defined) can be processed directly by the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm without referral to Moscow.

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