

CN 126

X/13 E/W -- SWEDISH TOURISTS BOYCOTT ALL BUT RUMANIA

STOCKHOLM, SEPT 3 -- (RFE SPECIAL/THRANE) -- RUMANIA IS THE ONLY WARSAW PACT COUNTRY STILL ON THE 1968 LIST OF SWEDENS LARGEST TOURIST AGENCY, RESO.

THE PRODUCTION MANAGER OF RESO, FOLKE MOLIN, SAID TODAY THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY CANCELLATIONS TO OTHER WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES SINCE THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. A THE AGENCY NOW "REFUSES TO DEAL WITH THEM FOR THE TIME BEING".

RESO HAD ARRANGED TRIPS ON A LARGE SCALE TO THE SOVIET UNION THIS SUMMER, BUT NOT ONE HAS GONE SINCE THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. "PEOPLE CHANGED THEIR BOOKINGS AND WENT TO SPAIN INSTEAD," MOLIN SAID.

TRIPS TO OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WHICH RESO ALSO SELLS FOR OTHER AGENCIES, ARE ALSO DONE FOR THIS YEAR.

"A FEW TOURISTS HAVE GONE TO BULGARIA WITH AGENCIES THAT WOULD NOT REFUND THEIR MONEY, BUT MANY CANCELLED EVEN IF IT MEANT A LOSS OF 50 PERCENT OF THE PRICE OF THEIR TICKET," MOLIN SAID. HE ADDED THAT NO FURTHER TRIPS TO POLAND AND HUNGARY HAVE BEEN SOLD SINCE THE INVASION STARTED, AND NO FURTHER TRIPS WOULD BE ARRANGED TO BULGARIA THIS YEAR.

HE SAID THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAD DISCUSSED REMOVING WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES COMPLETELY FROM THEIR FUTURE LISTS, "NOT FOR POLITICAL REASONS, BUT BECAUSE PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO GO." FOR THE TIME BEING THEY WOULD, HOWEVER, WAIT AND SEE HOW THE SITUATION DEVELOPED, HE SAID.

RUMANIA WAS A DIFFERENT MATTER, MOLIN SAID. THERE HAD BEEN "A FEW" CANCELLATIONS WHEN RUSSIAN TROOPS WERE REPORTED TO BE AT THE BORDER, "BUT ON THE WHOLE, BOOKINGS ARE GOOD."

OTHER TRAVEL AGENCIES GAVE SIMILAR REPORTS WHEN APPROACHED BY RFE. THE LABOR FEDERATIONS TRAVEL AGENCY, "RESEFRAEMJANDET" (TRAVEL PROMOTION) SAID "PEOPLE BOOK IN MASSES FOR RUMANIA BUT NOT FOR ANY OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES."

A NEW SWEDISH TRAVEL AGENCY "CONTINENTRESOR" WITH CHARTER FLIGHTS TO POLAND, RUMANIA, HUNGARY, BULGARIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, OPENED IN STOCKHOLM ON SEPTEMBER 2 AND IN MALMOE, SOUTH SWEDEN, ON MAY 1.

THE OWNER OF THE AGENCY, RAGNAR ERIKSSON, SAID THAT SEVERAL TRIPS TO RUMANIA WERE SOLD ON THE FIRST DAY IN STOCKHOLM, BUT NOT TO ANY OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRY. HE SAID HE DOUBTED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE TRIPS TO ANY COUNTRY BUT RUMANIA THIS YEAR. "THOSE WHO HAD ALREADY BOOKED IN MALMOE CANCELLED THEIR RESERVATIONS," HE SAID.

JON/HI

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