

Confidential Filing

Scientology : consideration of the policy of using the Immigration Rules to prevent Scientologists entering the U.K.

HOME AFFAIRS

SB
831

NOVEMBER 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
19.11.79							
26.11.79							
6.6.80							
24.6.80							
26.6.80							
2.7.80.							

PREM 19/254

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

Home
Affairs

From the Private Secretary

26 June 1980

Thank you for your letter of 25 June, forwarding an advance copy of the Home Secretary's paper for H committee on scientology.

I am sure that it will come as no surprise to you that the Prime Minister is entirely content with the line proposed by the Home Secretary. On the assumption that colleagues on H committee agree, the Prime Minister is quite content that the decision should be announced as soon as possible after the committee has met, by written answer.

I am sending a copy of this letter only to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

Stephen Boys-Smith Esq
Home Office

CONFIDENTIAL

979



PRIME MINISTER

HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

Home Secretary is now
ready to recommend
lifting the ban on scientologists.

25 June 1980

If agreed, this would be announced
by written answer early
next month.

Dear Sir,

Agreed
ms.

M.P. 25/6.

I wrote to you on 5 June to let you know where things stood on Scientology. I said that substantial progress had been made with the review of the material which had emerged from the American prosecutions.

... The Prime Minister may now wish to know of the attached paper which the Home Secretary is circulating to Home and Social Affairs Committee. He has concluded that the new material, and the events since H Committee last considered this matter in November, do not justify changing the decision then taken that the ban on the admission of Scientologists should be lifted. The matter is due to be discussed by the Committee on 1 July, and if his colleagues agree the Home Secretary proposes to make an announcement in the form set out in Annex B to the paper.

Yours,
Stephen

(S W BOYS SMITH)

M A Pattison Esq



HS

Home Affairs

10 DOWNING STREET

MISS ROBILLIARD

I attach a note from the Home Office (classified, and purely for internal use) about "progress" on scientology.

I am sure it would be right for the Prime Minister to resist seeing her constituency scientologists at this stage. I do not think we are going to see a Government decision on this this side of the summer recess.

MAP

6 June 1980

RESTRICTED

✓
MAD



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

5 June 1980

Dear Sir,

I said that I would bring you up to date on where we stand with scientology.

You will recollect that there is a review in hand, which has been publicly announced. We are making a good deal of progress but it involves the careful analysis of the very substantial quantities of material supplied by the American authorities following the court cases in that country when a number of scientologists were convicted of serious offences. It is difficult, therefore, to be precise about when the review will be completed, bearing in mind among other things, for example, the pressures on the people concerned created by problems with Iranians and Libyans. Their analysis of the material from America is, however, well advanced. The next step will be to submit proposals to Home Office Ministers, and then, in the light of the Home Secretary's conclusions, to circulate a paper to H Committee. It is worth remembering I think that, timing apart, this will not be a clear cut matter on which the weight of argument will all be on one side; difficulties are likely to be associated with whatever course of action is adopted.

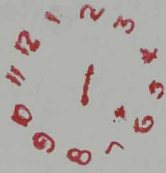
Yours,
Stephen

(S W BOYS SMITH)

M A Pattison Esq

RESTRICTED

25 JUN 1960



2.6.1980

M A PATTISON

I enclose a further letter from the scientologists in the Prime Minister's Constituency. They have since followed it up with a telephone call. I don't think they can expect a further meeting with the Prime Minister as yet. Do you know what the latest position is?

Jan R.

66 Lincoln Road,
East Finchley,
London N.2.

19th May 1980

The Rt Hon Maragret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street,
S.W.1.

Dear Mrs Thatcher.

It is now some months since our last and valuable meeting. It seems that since then the tide has turned considerably against the ban, and with 89 signatures on the Early Day Motion, I am very pleased to learn that Baroness Reichenbach, a German member of the Church won an important appeal last week.

I enclose two press clippings and a copy of the judgment in case it had not come to your attention.

I found it gratifying that the exact principle you found unacceptable in our initial meeting, that is to say, forbidding foreign visitors to engage in that which is perfectly legal in this country, was upheld by the independent adjudicator at the appeal.

This, I feel and hope, may have a significant effect on expediting the lifting of the ban on foreign Scientologists, as the ban itself, violates this very principle.

You suggested, in our last meeting, that we would be free to see you again in a few months. As the overall ban is clearly open to challenge as a violation of the Rule of Law with the adjudication's decision, I would like to request the meeting for your earliest convenience.

The stigma of the ban persists on my husband and I as long as this injustice continues. It is not an English way and I know you care about it.

With best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

M. Spencer-Smith

Michal Spencer-Smith (Mrs)

CONFIDENTIAL



✓
Home Affairs

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 November 1979

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Home Secretary's report on the II discussion about entry of foreign Scientologists - his minute of 21 November.

She would like to be kept informed of further developments leading to a future announcement of the decisions taken by the Committee.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

J.A. Chilcot, Esq.,
Home Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

RB

PRIME MINISTER

H Committee discussed on Monday two subjects in which you have an interest.

The Committee agreed in principle to end the ban on the entry of foreign scientologists. The timing and terms of the announcement were recognised to need further careful consideration. In the interim, the main problem will be the risk of a leak of the decision before the Government is ready to make its announcement.

The Home Secretary's summary of the discussion is at Flag A. The Committee minutes are Item 1 of Flag B.

The same meeting discussed the future of the maternity grant. Mr. Jenkin argued for a non-contributory maternity grant, although he would wish to ensure that Mr. Kevin McNamara's Bill should be talked out. He had it in mind to announce the Government's intention to change whilst Mr. McNamara's Bill was under discussion. The change could be achieved at no cost, given the compensating savings in staff and supplementary benefit payments. I understand that Mr. Biffen was virtually isolated in opposing a specific and formal commitment to the change at this stage. He and Mr. Jenkin were left to devise a form of words for use in the debate which would fall short of such a commitment, whilst indicating that the Government were disposed to favour the abolition of contributory conditions.

21 November 1979

MAP Letter was
wholly 'non-contributory'
For example (i.e. not a
record of contributory but a grant
paid directly (i.e.) or we need a
non-contributory. If further work is

CONFIDENTIAL



PRIME MINISTER

amb

ENTRY OF FOREIGN SCIENTOLOGISTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

We had a full discussion in Home and Social Affairs Committee on Monday, 19 November, on the policy of refusing entry to foreign Scientologists. I referred to your views (Mr Pattison's letter of 19 November 1979) towards the end of the discussion.

The Committee accepted that there is no longer any firm medical or social evidence of harm from the practice of Scientology which we can continue to rely on in public to support the policy of refusing admission to people who wish to study or work for Scientology. There was a good deal of concern about the practical consequences of removing the ban. There are a number of legal proceedings outstanding which we must not prejudice. The effect of a change of policy on public and Parliamentary opinion must be considered. The Committee noted, however, that it would continue to be possible to exclude individual Scientologists whose presence here would be undesirable, for example on account of criminal convictions in other countries. The majority of the Committee took the view that, in the absence of evidence which we could use in public, the ban on entry of foreign Scientologists should be lifted; and this was agreed.

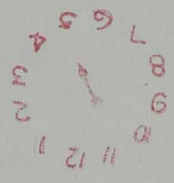
The timing and terms of any announcement of a change in policy and the manner of the announcement will need to be considered very carefully. The Secretary of State for Social Services and I will consult the Solicitor-General, in view of the legal actions which are pending, and the Chief Whip about Parliamentary handling. We will also consult the Secretary of State for Employment, since the Manpower Services Commission is responsible for the issue of work permits which have been tightly restricted in this area.

I am sending a copy of this minute to members of H Committee and Sir Robert Armstrong.

hsw.

21 November 1979

CONFIDENTIAL



21 NOV 1979



Home Affairs
cc Peter Hawes

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 November 1979

Dear John

The Prime Minister has seen the joint paper on scientology (H(79)73) which is to be discussed this afternoon.

that
She has noted/the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Social Services have not reached a definitive agreed view on what should be recommended to colleagues. As the Home Secretary will know, the Prime Minister has taken a close interest in the subject, which has affected some of her constituents over the years. She takes the view that the Government cannot keep the ban on scientologists entering the country unless Ministers are ready to say publicly why and to support the conclusion with evidence. In Mrs. Thatcher's view, the question is not whether we "approve" scientology but what possible justification there might be for this unique ban.

The Prime Minister would be content for the Home Secretary to ascribe this view to her in the course of discussion in the Committee.

I am sending a copy of this letter only to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely
Mike Pittman

J.A. Chilcot, Esq.,
Home Office.

PRIME MINISTER

You have a constituency interested in scientology.

The ban is to be discussed in H. This joint paper from Messrs. Whitelaw and Jenkin is inconclusive. Despite the arguments against scientology, the Home Secretary does not wish to use immigration regulations as the vehicle singling out this religious group for a ban. Mr. Jenkin considers that any move to lift the ban would, on balance, be disadvantageous. Both recognise that the ban applied exclusively to scientologists is probably inequitable given the growth of other equally disturbing fringe religions.

I see little prospect of this indecisive paper leading to a decision to lift the ban. If you favour that move, it might be worth my writing around the members of the Committee to put your views on the record.

- Will leave it to the Chairman to let them know my views

MAD

We really cannot keep this ban unless we are ready publicly to say why and to support the conclusion with evidence.

14 November 1979

The question is not whether we 'approve' scientology or not, but what possible justification there is, this unique ban.

MT

