

Confidential Filing

Mrs. E. Kanturkova writes to the PM about the arrest and detention of ten signatories of Charter 77

CZECHOSLOVAKIAJUNE 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
23.7.79							
25.7.79							
27.7.79							
3.8.79							
24.10.79							
14.11.79							
7.12.79							
1.12.81							


CLOSED

PREM 19/3247

MFJ


1 December 1981

Czechoslovakia: Charger 77

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 29 November and the enclosed letter from Mr. Jiri Kanturek. She is content that we should proceed in the manner proposed in your letter.

MODBA

F.N. Richards, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.





Prime Minister

After to proceed as at 'A'.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 November 1981

Dear Michael,

Czechoslovakia: Charter 77

/ We have received via our Embassy in Prague the enclosed letter from Mr Jiri Kanturek addressed to the Prime Minister.

Bryan Cartledge, in his letter of 23 July 1979, acknowledged on behalf of the Prime Minister an earlier letter from Mrs Kanturkova. This time we would not recommend that an acknowledgement should be sent, because it would be difficult to reply without either confirming a misapprehension on his part or entering into unsuitable detail. In his letter, Mr Kanturek refers to a demarche by the UK in connection with the imprisonment of eight Czechoslovak dissidents. The demarche was in fact mainly about trials of religious activists and it had been agreed in the Ten beforehand that its detail should be kept confidential.

A. We would propose, however, that Lord Trefgarne who will be visiting Prague on 14-16 December should raise the question of imprisoned dissidents with the Czechoslovak authorities and make clear our views. Thereafter the Embassy would send an appropriate message to Mr Kanturek.

Yours ever,

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing St

The Honourable
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
The Prime Minister of
Great Britain
10. Downing Street
L o n d o n W. 1

Jiří Kantůrek
Xaveriova 2735
Praha 5 150 00
ČSSR

26.10.1981

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

I have just heard that the British Government, through Her Majesty's Embassy in Prague, has expressed grave concern over the imprisonment of eight Czechoslovak citizens, one of whom is my wife, the writer Eva Kantůrková. You may remember that she wrote to you about the case of the well-known playwright Václav Havel and other Czech intellectuals sentenced to long terms of imprisonment in October 1979.

Now my wife herself is in the same situation. The official case brought against her is simply absurd. After 1968, because she refused to write in accordance with the policy and ideology adopted by the state, she was black-listed as a writer, and since then has not been allowed to publish her work in this country. Her books circulate among friendly readers in typescript only - itself a matter of some risk for all concerned. Abroad, by contrast, her books have already appeared in Sweden, France, West Germany, while her latest novel is being prepared for publication in Canada in an English translation.

That she continues to write and publish in this way, entirely in keeping with the Constitution of Czechoslovakia, with the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights, and with the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, has earned her the official accusation of "subversive activity", and she is in danger of being sentenced to as much as ten years' imprisonment.

In the course of interrogation in prison, where she has already spent six months, my wife has behaved with great courage, defending an author's right to write in accordance with her most profound convictions and the dictates of her own conscience. I do not dare to guess what the future holds for her, but judging by earlier trials, I am deeply concerned for her.

Whether she will be brought to trial, and what sentence is then passed on her, depends to a considerable extent on international public opinion. I want to express my gratitude to your Government, and to thank you personally, for the stand taken by the British Government in this matter, and I feel sure that you will not forget the fate of my wife in the days to come.

Yours sincerely,

J. Kantarel

30 NOV 1981





Czechoslovakia

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Press Secretary

7 December, 1979

Dear Ms Cave,

Thank you very much for your letter of 15 November to Mr. Henry James enclosing a copy of a letter which was sent to the Prime Minister from Mrs. Eva Kanturkova.

I have passed the letter to the appropriate channel in No. 10.

Yours sincerely,

S.A. Walmsley

MISS S. WALMSLEY
PS to Mr. B. Ingham

Ms. Jane Cave,
Palach Press Ltd.,
Press & Literary Agency.





Palach Press Limited

Press & Literary Agency. 19 Earlham House, 35 Mercer Street, London WC2H 9QS Tel. 01-836 4764

Mr Henry James,
Press Officer,
10 Downing Street,
London W. 1.

15 November 1979

Dear Mr James,

Please find enclosed a letter from Mrs Eva Kanturkova to Mrs Thatcher. I assume that Mrs Thatcher has, in fact, already received a copy but we have been asked by Mrs Kanturkova to send another copy in case, by some chance, the first one did not arrive.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Cave
Jane Cave

*Stephane - pl thank
Jane Cave for the
attached letter from
The Kanturkova. Then
pass papers to -
Alexander*

Ka. Hunt - 7/11

Vážená paní
Margareta Thatcherová,
ministerská předsedkyně
vlády Velké Británie,
Downing Street 10.
Londýn

Drahá paní Thatcherová!

Čekala jsem s odpovědí na Váš laskavý dopis až jak dopadne proces. Nyní jsou naše naděje zklamány, Vám však přesto z celého srdce děkuji za zájem a pomoc. Já i všichni mí přátelé jsme si vážili toho, že jste dopisem oslovila přímo nás, bezprávné a pronásledované.

Přeji Vám, drahá paní Thatcherová, mnoho úspěchů a prosím Vás, abyste při jakémkoli celoevropském rozhodování myslila vždy i na to, že Čechy jsou země starobylé evropské kultury citění a myšlení, že Československo nepřestalo být evropskou zemí a že jestliže my, kteří se i ve své vlasti i před světem můžeme projevit jen málo, zde setrváváme, tak tedy hlavně proto, abychom tuto evropskou tradici uchránili pro národ a pokračovali v ní.

Upřímně Vaše

Eva Kantůrková,
spisovatelka.

V Praze dne 24.10.1979

The Honourable Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of Great Britain
10 Downing Street, London S. W. 1

Dear Mrs. Thatcher!

I waited with my answer to Your kind letter until the results of the trial were made public. Now our expectations have been disappointed, nevertheless I want to thank You wholeheartedly for Your interest and help. I and all my friends appreciate that You addressed Your letter to us, who are without rights and are persecuted.

I wish You much success and ask You to keep in mind at all levels of European decision-making that Bohemia is a land of old European culture of emotion and mind, that Czechoslovakia has not ceased to be a part of Europe and if we, who may express ourselves in our homeland and before the world only in a limited way, remain here, it is mainly so that we may preserve this European tradition for the people of the country and so that we may carry it on.

Yours sincerely

Eva Kantárková,
writer.

Prague, 24 October 1979

RESTRICTED

Prime Minister

(2)

Wesley Box

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Paul



14 November 1979

Ans

Is

Dear Michael,

CHARTER 77 IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

--- I enclose a further letter to the Prime Minister from Mrs Eva Kanturkova, a writer and one of the signatories of Charter 77, which has reached us via HM Embassy in Prague.

Mrs Kanturkova wrote to the Prime Minister on 28 June drawing attention to the arrest of 10 signatories of the Charter and asking for Mrs Thatcher's support. Bryan Cartledge replied on 23 July.

Mrs Kanturkova's latest letter is largely to thank the Prime Minister and does not appear to expect a reply. You may however wish to bring it to the Prime Minister's attention, both as an expression of the writer's thanks and because it makes the point about Czechoslovakia's European traditions which Mrs Thatcher included in her speech in Luxembourg last month in relation to Eastern Europe generally.

Yours etc

Paul

(P Lever)

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WATER RESOURCES DIVISION

WASHINGTON, D. C.



NOV 4 1970

The Honourable Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of Great Britain
10 Downing Street, London S. W. 1

Dear Mrs. Thatcher!

I waited with my answer to Your kind letter until the results of the trial werw made public. Now our expectations have been dissapointed, nevertheless I want to thank You wholeheartedly for Your interest and help. I and all my friends appreciate that You addressed Your letter to us, who are without rights and are persecuted.

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Yours sincerely

Eva Kantůrková
Eva Kantůrková,
writer.

Prague, 24 October 1979

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BXP 04/24

TO EMB EEC NATÓ INFORMS PARIS AND NUMBER TEN

RETRACT 71424 OCT

FCO NEWS CONFERENCE 1230 24 OCTOBER 1979

THE TRIAL IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA OF MEMBERS OF THE CHARTER 77 MOVEMENT

SPOKESMAN MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: 'HM GOVERNMENT SHARE THE WIDESPREAD CONCERN AT THE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITIES AGAINST SUPPORTERS OF THE CHARTER 77 MOVEMENT AND DEPLORE THE SENTENCES PASSED ON SIX MEMBERS OF THE MOVEMENT YESTERDAY WHICH THEY CONSIDER TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH THE CSCE (CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE) FINAL ACT.

'THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ALREADY MADE KNOWN THEIR CONCERN BILATERALLY TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITIES. THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ACTION IN CONCERT WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE NINE IS UNDER DISCUSSION'!

SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY, MR DAVID HOWELL, HAD TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY ON 22 OCTOBER OF EXPRESSING HMG'S CONCERN ON THIS MATTER TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTER OF FUEL AND POWER, MR EHRENBERGER, WHO WAS IN LONDON ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT.

ENDS
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① Copy to Michael Alexander
as this may come up
at Questions tomorrow

② Cumulate CA

24/10

Vážená paní
Margareta Thatcherová,
ministerská předsedkyně
vlády Velké Británie,
Downing Street 10.
Londýn

Drahá paní Thatcherová!

Čekala jsem s odpovědí na Váš laskavý dopis až jak dopadne proces. Nyní jsou naše naděje zklamány, Vám však přesto z celého srdce děkuji za zájem a pomoc. Já i všichni mí přátelé jsme si vážili toho, že jste dopisem oslovila přímo nás, bezprávné a pronásledované.

Přeji Vám, drahá paní Thatcherová, mnoho úspěchů a prosím Vás, abyste při jakémkoli celoevropském rozhodování myslela vždy i na to, že Čechy jsou země starobylé evropské kultury cítění a myšlení, že Československo nepřestalo být evropskou zemí a že jestliže my, kteří se i ve své vlasti i před světem můžeme projevit jen málo, zde setrváváme, tak tedy hlavně proto, abychom tuto evropskou tradici uchránili pro národ a pokračovali v ní.

Upřímně Vaše

Eva Kantůrková
Eva Kantůrková,
spisovatelka.

V Praze dne 24.10.1979

Czechoslovakia

Five

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

22 August 1979

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 20 August about Charter 77 and human rights.

The Prime Minister is grateful for your good wishes.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

K88

The Rev. J. Lang and Ing. Pavel Moritz.

NAARDEN COMMITTEE — CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(Nárdenský Výbor — Československo)

Telephone:
01 - 727 - 7849.

22
22, Ladbroke Square,
London, W.11.

20th August, 1979.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

We wish to express our grateful thanks to you for your letter to Prague in support of the signatories of Charter 77 and in protest at the forthcoming trials.

May we hope for your continued support for all those who stand up for the restoration of human rights and freedoms in those countries which have come forcibly under Soviet domination?

This letter is written on the eve of the 11th anniversary of the Invasion in 1968 - on the fatal day of 21st August. We, Czechs and Slovaks, together with our colleagues, representatives of 14 different nations suffering under the Soviet domination, march to-day to the Czechoslovak and Soviet Embassies - to hand in our protest.

With best wishes and renewed thanks for your support,

we remain,
onbehalf of the

J. Lang

Rev. J. Lang S.J.



P. Moritz

Ing. Pavel Moritz

CONFIDENTIAL
FM F C O 031100Z AUG 79
TO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA
TELGRAM NUMBER 637 OF 3 AUGUST.

Czechoslovakia
Prime Minister

FOR WALDEN AND CARTLEDGE.

6/8
4/8

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF DEPT
WAS RECEIVED FROM PRAGUE TELNO 135 OF 2 AUGUST

MY TELNO 130: CHARTER 77

1. MRS KANTURKOVA CALLED AT THE EMBASSY THIS MORNING
(2 AUGUST) TO COLLECT THE ORIGINAL OF THE LETTER FROM
MRS THATCHER'S PRIVATE SECRETARY. SHE HAD RECEIVED THE
COPY WE SENT BY REGISTERED POST WITH 24 HOURS: THE
ENVELOPE HAD BEEN OPENED. SHE SAID THAT SHE HAD NOT
BEEN TAKEN IN FOR QUESTIONING AND THOUGHT THE DESPATCH
OF THE COPY THROUGH THE OPEN POST AND THE FACT THAT THE
EXISTENCE OF A LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER WAS
PUBLICLY KNOWN HAD AFFORDED HER SOME PROTECTION.

26

2. MRS KANTURKOVA WAS VERY GRATEFUL INDEED FOR THE
PRIME MINISTER'S RESPONSE TO HER LETTER: SHE HAD
WRITTEN MANY TIMES TO HER OWN GOVERNMENT WITHOUT GETTING
A REPLY. SHE HAD HAD THE LETTER TRANSLATED AND WAS
OBVIOUSLY MOVED BY THE WARMTH OF THE MESSAGE. SHE HAD
NOT SENT LETTERS TO OTHER WORLD LEADERS BUT HER FRIENDS
MIGHT WELL NOW DO SO.

3. WE ASKED IF SHE PROPOSED TO MAKE THE CONTENTS
OF THE LETTER PUBLIC. SHE SAID SHE WOULD RESPECT ANY
WISHES MRS THATCHER MIGHT HAVE EXPRESSED BUT SHE
HERSELF WOULD BE IN FAVOUR OF PUBLISHING IT. WE
SAID THE CONTENTS HAD NOT OF COURSE BEEN RELEASED
IN LONDON PRIOR TO CONFIRMATION THAT SHE HAD
RECEIVED IT BUT WE THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE NO
OBJECTION TO HER NOW USING THE LETTER AS SHE
WISHED. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE LETTER WILL BECOME
PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE FAIRLY SOON.

agreed
mb

4. WE ASKED MRS KANTURKOVA IF SHE EXPECTED POLICE
REPRISALS. SHE SAID HER HUSBAND WHO WISHES TO KEEP
HIS JOB (IN ITSELF A MORE MENIAL ONE THAN HE HAD
A DECADE AGO) HAD NOT SIGNED CHARTER 77. HE NOW
EXPECTED TO LOSE IT. AS A WRITER SHE HAD NOT BEEN
ABLE TO GET HER WORK PUBLISHED FOR SOME TIME.
SHE AND HER HUSBAND MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO
FURTHER HARASSMENT BUT SHE HAD ACTED WITH HER EYES
OPEN AND DID NOT REGRET IT.

5. AS HER LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER SUGGESTS
MRS KANTURKOVA GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF A SINCERE
WOMAN WILLING TO MAKE CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL
SACRIFICES FOR HER BELIEFS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE
TO JUDGE ON THE BASIS OF A QUARTER OF AN HOUR'S
CONVERSATION IN CZECH, BUT SHE APPEARS TO BE
TEMPERAMENTALLY AN INDIVIDUALIST AND NEITHER
POLITICAL ACTIVIST NOR LEADER MATERIAL.

GRRINGTON

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

Czechoslovakia

GR 290

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 271600Z

FROM PRAGUE 271340Z JULY 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 130

OF 27 JULY

Enter - SA.

*File
21/7*

YOUR TELNO 99: CHARTER 77

1. HAVING CONSIDERED VARIOUS POSSIBLE METHODS OF TRANSMISSION I SHALL FORWARD A COPY OF THE LETTER FROM MRS THATCHER'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, WHEN RECEIVED TODAY, BY REGISTERED POST TO MRS KANTURKOVA WITH A COVERING LETTER SUGGESTING THAT IF SHE WOULD LIKE TO COLLECT THE ORIGINAL SHE SHOULD CALL AT THE EMBASSY. THE DAILY TELEGRAPH'S ALLEGATION THAT THE LETTER HAS BEEN HANDED OVER SECRETLY IN PRAGUE WILL I FEAR HAVE ALERTED THE POLICE AND WILL HAVE REDUCED THE CHANCE OF ITS SAFE ARRIVAL, BUT USE OF THE OPEN POST INITIALLY HAS THE MERITS OF NOT INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES AS MESSENGERS AND OF PRE-EMPTING ACCUSATIONS OF COVERT ACTION.

2. WE HAVE HEARD TODAY FROM DISSIDENT SOURCES THAT MRS KANTURKOVA IS AWARE THROUGH A BBC BROADCAST THAT A LETTER IS ON THE WAY. SHE EXPECTS TO BE TAKEN IN FOR QUESTIONING BY THE POLICE ON 30 JULY. DOUBTLESS THEY WILL TRY TO PERSUADE HER NOT TO PUBLICIZE THE REPLY. HOWEVER, SHE IS SAID TO BE DETERMINED TO STICK TO HER GUNS AND TO CALL AT THE EMBASSY TO COLLECT IT.

/3.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

3. WE SHALL ANSWER ANY PRESS ENQUIRES AS INSTRUCTED IN PARA 3 OF YOUR TUR. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER WILL OF COURSE BY ONE MEANS OR ANOTHER SHORTLY BE MADE PUBLIC. (THE REUTERS' OPERATION HERE IS VULNERABLE TO PRESSURE. HENCE THE LOCAL OFFICE WILL TAKE CARE NOT TO BREAK THE STORY.) IF AS PREDICTED MRS KANTURKOVA IS TAKEN IN FOR QUESTIONING IT IS LIKELY THAT THE FEW WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS HERE WILL ENSURE WIDE PUBLICITY.

4. I WILL REPORT WHEN WE HAVE EITHER CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT OF THE TEXT OR THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN COLLECTED.

MALE

COPIES SENT TO
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

FILES

EESD

NEWS.D

IP.D

CSCE UNIT

RES.D

PS

PS/LPS

PS/MR BLAKER

PS/PUS

SIR A DUFF

MR GULLARD

MR FERGUSSON

CONFIDENTIAL

Czechoslovakia ~~EE~~

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00 PRAGUE DESKBY 251600Z

enter a.c.

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CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 251600Z

FM FCO 251440Z JUL 1979

TO IMMEDIATE PRAGUE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 99 OF 25 JULY

MY TELNO 87: CHARTER 77

1. UNDER THE HEADLINE 'THATCHER SIDES WITH ARRESTED CZECHOSLOVAK DISSIDENTS' TODAY'S DAILY TELEGRAPH CARRIES A REPORT BY JOHN MILLER THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS STEPPED INTO THE HUMAN RIGHTS STRUGGLE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY INFORMING DISSIDENTS THAT SHE DEPLORES POLICE HARRASSMENT AND IMPRISONMENT OF THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE REPORT SAYS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS RELIABLY UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE SENT A LETTER TO PRAGUE ADDRESSED TO LEADING MEMBERS OF CHARTER 77 AND THAT IT HAS BEEN SECRETLY HANDED OVER IN PRAGUE. THE REPORT CONTINUES THAT DOWNING STREET HAS BEEN CONSIDERING ITS POSITION FOR SOME TIME WHILE MINISTERS AND SENIOR BRITISH DIPLOMATS HAVE RAISED THE QUESTION WITH CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN LONDON FOR TRADE AND OTHER TALKS. WHITEHALL OFFICIALS HAD DECLINED TO DISCLOSE THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTER. THE REPORT COMMENTS THAT THE TIMING OF THE LETTER WOULD ANGER THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS BELIEVED TO BE POISED TO STAGE A MAJOR SHOW TRIAL NEXT WEEK OF 10 ACTIVISTS FOR SUBVERSION. ALTHOUGH IN OPPOSITION MRS THATCHER HAD SPOKEN OUT AGAINST THE LACK OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOME EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IT WAS THE FIRST TIME AS PRIME MINISTER THAT SHE HAD BOLDLY CHALLENGED ANOTHER GOVERNMENT'S RECORD.

2. FOR YOUR OWN INFORMATION THE ACTUAL POSITION IS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS AUTHORISED A REPLY DATED 23 JULY FROM HER PRIVATE SECRETARY ON HER BEHALF TO MRS KANTURKOVA EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR THE POSITION OF THE 10 DETAINEES INCLUDING THREE WOMEN AND SAYING THAT WE AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EEC HAD

CONFIDENTIAL

/EXPRESSED

EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT AND HAD REMINDED THEM OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. THE LETTER WILL REACH YOU IN THE BAG LEAVING HERE ON 26 JULY. PLEASE ARRANGE FOR IT TO BE PASSED TO MRS KANTURKOVA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. IN REPLY TO PRESS ENQUIRIES NUMBER TEN ARE CONFIRMING THAT A LETTER ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S BEHALF IS ON ITS WAY TO MRS KANTURKOVA AND ARE DECLINING TO DISCLOSE ITS CONTENTS. YOU SHOULD STICK TO THIS LINE IN RESPONSE TO ANY PRESS ENQUIRIES.

4. IF THE CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITIES COMPLAIN TO YOU ABOUT THE LETTER, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT IT WAS SIGNED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE SECRETARY AND THAT IT REITERATES THE GOVERNMENT'S WELL KNOWN DISAPPROVAL OF ABUSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INSISTENCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT, AS EXPRESSED BY THE LORD PRIVY SEAL TO JABLONSKY IN LONDON ON 2 JULY.

CARRINGTON

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

FILES
EESD
NEWS DEPT
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PS/LPS
PS/MR BLAKER
PS/PUS
SIR A DUFF
MR BULLARD
MR FERGUSON

Czechoslovakia



10 DOWNING STREET

M. Cartledge.

6/10

6/10

24/1

Charter 77 Letter

I expect you saw the attached in to-day's Telegraph. Neither the New Dept, E.E.S. nor this Press Office have dropped from Milin on the contents of our reply to Mrs Kautukova's letter so he must have some other source or be speculating.

We and the F.O. are merely saying in answer to enquiries that the Prime Minister authorised a reply to go on her behalf and that this is being sent.

Charles A

24/1

THATCHER SIDES WITH ARRESTED CZECH DISSIDENTS

By JOHN MILLER, Diplomatic Staff

MRS THATCHER yesterday stepped into the human rights struggle in Czechoslovakia and told Czech dissidents that she deplores police harassment and imprisonment of themselves and their families.

The Prime Minister was reliably understood to have sent a letter to Prague addressed to leading members of Charter 77, the human rights group coming under intense pressure from the authorities.

EEC PUTS VIETNAM AID ON ICE

By ALAN OSBORN,
in Brussels

THE Common Market decided yesterday to suspend its £35 million aid programme for the current year to Vietnam.

But it said the country would get the money eventually if it keeps its promise over refugees.

Foreign Ministers of the nine EEC countries agreed that the 1979 Vietnam aid programme would be withheld until October at least.

By then the UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim would have reported to the UN on how adequately Hanoi had met the pledges it gave in Geneva a few days ago about easing the expulsion of Chinese and other nationals from its territory.

Possible increase

If the Waldheim report is favourable, then the Brussels Commission will propose a resumption, and even an increase in the Vietnam aid pro-

The timing of the letter will anger the Czechoslovak Government, which is believed to be poised to stage a major "show" trial next week of 10 activists for "subversion."

The 10, among them three women, were arrested in police raids at the end of May. The arrests prompted a Charter signator and author, Mrs Eva Kanturkova, to write to Mrs Thatcher.

The letter, smuggled out of Czechoslovakia, said that "part of the intellectual community is repressed" and asked her to intervene with the Government.

Downing Street has been considering its position for some weeks while ministers and senior British diplomats raised the plight of the detained Charterists with visiting Czechoslovak Government officials in London for trade and other talks.

The Czech response was that it was none of Britain's business and the arrests were a purely internal affair.

Mr Thatcher's other consideration was that it would be difficult to deliver her reply to Mrs Kanturkova.

Struggle supported

Whitehall officials last night declined to disclose the contents of the letter, which was secretly handed over in the Czech capital.

'Quangos'

By JAMES WIGHTMAN

Continued from Page One

naming "Quangos" to be disbanded.

"Quangos" cost the country more than £7 million a year in fees, plus running costs of at least that figure. There are more than 9,600 paid appointments and nearly 31,000 unpaid posts.

Mrs Thatcher was questioned only slightly about the public expenditure issues during Prime Minister's questions in the Commons yesterday.

In answer to Mr Callaghan, Leader of the Opposition, she said the expenditure planned by the previous Administration would have taken the country back to where it was in 1979 when the International Monetary Fund had to be called. Even the last Government had to impose public expenditure cuts.

She added: "It lies ill in your mouth to criticise us for doing now what you had to do when the IMF was called in."

Mrs Thatcher also said: "It is important we reduce public expenditure as a proportion of the total national income, and our task is to constrain it from growing further."

Asked by a Conservative MP Mr Alan Clark (Plymouth, South), to deny reports about a defence being involved in the public expenditure cuts, Mrs Thatcher did not answer directly but added: "We shall, of course, honour our commitment to Nato."

Her reply was taken as confirmation that the Defence Ministry is to take its share of public expenditure cuts but that the pruning will be in the administrative side and not among Service personnel and equipment.

Sharpest exchange

Mr Callaghan's question about expenditure cuts led to his sharpest exchange with Mrs Thatcher since she became Prime Minister.

He normally asks one question and sometimes none at twice-weekly Prime Minister's questions, but yesterday he intervened four times and ended by banging the despatch box as he tried unsuccessfully to put

Possible increase

If the Waldheim report is favourable, then the Brussels Commission will propose a suspension, and even an increase in the Vietnam aid programme.

At the same time yesterday, Ministers agreed to provide a further 20,000 tonnes of rice and 100 tonnes of milk powder plus a further £6,600,000 in cash for the refugees themselves.

S. visa help

Officials for Vietnam

Our Washington correspondent writes that the Carter administration is ready to send American officials to Vietnam to help speed up the processing of visas for refugees wishing to join family members already in the United States.

U.S. consular officials would be sent to Hanoi for the first time since the war in Vietnam, and former Senator Dick Clark, special coordinator on refugee problems.

Malaysia not softening and
Picture—P6

NINE MORE ARE EXECUTED IN IRAN

By Our Staff Correspondent
in Teheran

Two men caught trying to tap up oil pipelines in Iran's southwestern province of Chaharmahal and Kohgiluyeh were executed by a firing squad yesterday, less than 24 hours after their capture. They had Arabic names.

Two Arabs in Khuzestan have been executed in a campaign of intimidation and subversion in support of a claim for autonomy. A third man was executed yesterday in Abadan for "revolt against the Government of the Islamic Republic," but no details are given.

Two other men in the province were executed, one for incest with his daughters and the other for trafficking in drugs. Gonbad Kavus in the north of Iran. Four gendarmes were shot for killing people in the town of Gonbad Kavus. These nine executions bring the total since the Islamic revolution to nearly

Struggle supported

Whitehall officials last night declined to disclose the contents of the letter, which was secretly handed over in the Czech capital.

But they made it clear that Mrs Thatcher had thrown her weight behind the Charterists' struggle for human rights and deplored the continued detention of the 10 people.

The 10, among them three women, were arrested in police raids at the end of May, promoting a Charter signatory and author, Mrs Eva Kanturkova, to write to Mrs Thatcher.

The letter, smuggled out of Czechoslovakia, said that "part of the intellectual community is repressed" and asked her to intervene with the Government.

Downing Street has been considering its position for some weeks while Ministers and senior British diplomats raised the plight of the Charterists with Czechoslovak Government officials visiting London for trade and other talks.

Although in Opposition she often spoke out against the lack of human rights in some East European Communist bloc countries, it is the first time as Prime Minister that she has boldly challenged another Government's record.

The Czech movement was started in January 1977 with a manifesto protesting over violations of the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Agreements on European security and co-operation.

Signed by 1,000

The Charter has been signed by more than 1,000 people, some of whom have been dismissed from their jobs and repeatedly harassed.

Mrs Thatcher's letter specifically refers to the 10 people who formed the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS), which has been particularly active in the past few months spotlighting corruption and illegal acts by the security police.

The best-known of those detained are Vaclav Havel, a playwright, an ex-Communist journalist Jiri Dienstbier, and Peter Uhl, an economist who has declared himself to be a Trotskyite.

All face as much as 10 years' imprisonment if convicted

Minister He normally asks one question and sometimes none at the twice-weekly Prime Minister's questions, but yesterday he intervened four times and ended banging the despatch box as he tried unsuccessfully to put a final question.

Mrs Thatcher dealt with his questions with brisk authority and Mr Callaghan ended up showing his exasperation. His final words were inaudible as the Speaker brought the 15-minute question session to a close amid Tory cheers for the Prime Minister.

Mr Callaghan's questioning had been mainly directed at the Government's decision to maintain minimum lending rate at its present high level.

He asked at one point: "How many bankruptcies do you expect there will be and how much unemployment are we going to see before you see sense on this absurdly high level of interest rates?"

Mrs Thatcher told him: "You know, you can never, never give any undertaking on interest rates. If you were at this Despatch Box, you would say exactly the same thing."

Local, spending cuts and 4 p.c. more for defence—P2;
Parliament—P9
Editorial Comment—P18

REST DAY AND A BARBECUE FOR THE QUEEN

By Our Staff Correspondent in
Blantyre

The Queen was resting yesterday in the Zomba plateau which has a bracing "dry wine" atmosphere and ideal for restoring royal energy before attending the Commonwealth Conference in Zambia on Friday.

In a delightful and simple English-style stone cottage, the Queen, Prince Philip and Prince Andrew, with only a handful of the royal household in attendance, spent Monday night and most of yesterday.

It is exactly the sort of rustic atmosphere which delights the Queen. Here in the heart of Africa, the plateau gives magnificent views of the plains for

Czechoslovakia



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 July 1979

Charter 77

Thank you for sending me, with your letter of 20 July, the draft of a reply which I could send on the Prime Minister's behalf to Mrs. Eva Kanturkova, the Czechoslovak authoress and signatory of Charter 77.

The Prime Minister has agreed that I may reply to Mrs. Kanturkova in the terms proposed and I now enclose my signed letter to her. I should be grateful if you would forward it to our embassy in Prague for delivery.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

5/11



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 July 1979

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of 28 June about the recent arrest and detention of ten signatories of Charter 77. Mrs Thatcher read with great interest and sympathy your description of the deplorable situation faced by these ten people, including three women.

The British Government were already following this matter very carefully. Indeed, along with other members of the European Community, we had expressed to the Czechoslovak Government the deep concern of public opinion and the Government in Britain. We had also reminded your Government of the importance we attach to the full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, including the provisions which deal with human rights.

The Prime Minister has asked me to assure you most warmly that you need have no fear that your letter will be forgotten. It will be vividly in our minds as we pursue discussions with other Governments about the need for full implementation of the Final Act and an end to unjustified treatment of those who speak out for human rights everywhere in Europe.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

Mrs E. Kanturkova.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

Agree that I should reply in your
reply in these terms.

20 July 1979

for
20/7

Thank you very much

Dear Bryan,

CHARTER 77 IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

You wrote to me on 9 July enclosing a letter to the Prime Minister from Mrs Eva Kanturkova, a Czechoslovak writer and signatory of Charter 77.

In my reply of 10 July I said that we were consulting HM Embassy at Prague on how to get any reply to Mrs Kanturkova.

--- The Embassy have confirmed that they would be able to forward a reply. In our view this could most appropriately take the form of a letter from you. I enclose a draft. If you would send the signed letter to me, we shall arrange for it to be forwarded through the Embassy in Prague.

Yours etc

Paul

(P Lever)

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street

Registr
No.

DRAFT

Type 1 +

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

 Top Secret,
Secret.
Confidential.
Restricted.
Unclassified.

To:—

 Mrs E Kanturkova
Xaveriova 13
PRAGUE 5

From

B G CARTLEDGE

Telephone No. Ext.

Department

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of 28 June about the recent arrest and detention of ten signatories of Charter 77. Mrs Thatcher read with great interest and sympathy your description of the deplorable situation faced by these ten people, including three women.

The British Government were already following this matter very carefully. Indeed, along with other members of the European Community, we had expressed to the Czechoslovak Government the deep concern of public opinion and the Government in Britain. We had also reminded your Government of the importance we attach to the full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, including the provisions which deal with human rights.

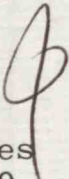
The Prime Minister has asked me to assure you most warmly that you need have no fear that your letter will be forgotten. It will be vividly in our minds as we pursue discussions with other Governments about the need for full implementation of the Final Act and an end to unjustified treatment of those who speak out for human rights everywhere in Europe.

BRIAN CARTLEDGE

Please see the attached; this is alleged to be the Czech text of the Kanturkova letter.

I know you are seeking advice on how or whether the Prime Minister should respond. You will see that the Palach Press ask for a copy of the Prime Minister's reply, and suggest that this is how Mr Callaghan responded in times past.

I have acknowledged, but have not committed us in any way.


Henry L James
16 July 1979



Palach Press Limited

Press & Literary Agency. 19 Earlham House, 35 Mercer Street, London WC2H 9QS Tel. 01-836 4764

Mr. Henry James
Press Officer
10 Downing Street
London SW1.

July 12. 1979

Dear Mr. James,

I am enclosing the Czech text of the letter that Eva Kanturkova sent to Mrs. Thatcher. The copy that we, Palach Press, sent to you via the BBC was a signed copy of the original which was mailed in Czechoslovakia. We were asked by Mrs. Kanturkova to forward to you the copy as it was not certain that the original would get out of Czechoslovakia. We are in regular contact with Mrs. Kanturkova as well as with all of the Charter 77 leaders and would appreciate it if Mrs. Thatcher would send us a copy of her reply to Mrs. Kanturkova, as was previously done by Mr. Callaghan, and we would make sure that she received it.

Yours sincerely

Jan Kavan
Director

JK/JM

Vážená paní
ministerská předsedkyně
Margareta Thatcherová,
Downing Street 10.
Londýn

Vážená paní ministerská předsedkyně!

Pocit činu příliš troufalého se staví proti napsání tohoto listu, avšak nouze nejvyšší mi velí napsat jej. Doufám, že najdu před Vámi, ale i před svým národem ospravedlnění, až jej přečtete celý.

V duchu jsem Vám blahopřála k Vašemu zvolení a blahopřála jsem k volbě i Anglii; na mém mínění ovšem nijak nezáleží, ale přece my z daleka a z jiných horizontů můžeme snáze rozpoznat vůli k pevnosti a zřetelně vytyčeným dobrým zásadám. A protože Vás takto vidím, dovolila jsem si napsat právě Vám.

Před několika týdny bylo v Praze zatčeno deset českých intelektuálů, členů Výboru na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných, výboru, který je součástí hnutí občanské iniciativy Charta 77. Výbor shromažďoval veřejně dostupné informace o přehmatech při vyšetřováních a odsouzeních některých politických případů a své znalosti ve formě zpráv, upozornění nebo stížností předával státním úřadům se žádostí o přešetření nebo nápravu. Výbor postupoval zcela v mezích práva a Ústavy naší republiky i Helsinských dohod. A bylo-li jeho deset členů zatčeno a obviněno z podvracení státu, je to obvinění nespravedlivé a tendenční.

Všichni ti lidé jsou vzdělaní, kulturní a slušní; je mezi nimi světoznámý spisovatel, bývalí novináři, vědecktí pracovníci, kněží. Go však zvláště popouzí, že z deseti obviněných jsou

tři ženy, z nichž jedna je matkou sedmi dětí. Už jen přivést na svět sedm lidských životů a vychovat sedm dobrých dětí by si zasloužilo jen uznání! Když je za své přesvědčení pronásledován muž, může to být bráno jako přirozené riziko; ale věřit nevinné a spořádané ženy je nekulturní a neslušné.

Složitě vazby, do nichž byla naše zem historií vtažena a do nichž sama vstoupila, dovolují a vynucují si, že část národní inteligence je utlačena a musí tvořit vlastně v podzemí. Aby mi bylo dobře rozuměno! Žijeme tu trpělivě ve své vlasti, odhodláni pracovat i v těžkých podmínkách k jejímu prospěchu. Naše díla jsou zakazována a ničena, nesmíme publikovat, a právě my, kteří máme nejvíc důvodů být nespokojeni a nejzřetelněji tyto důvody rozpoznáváme, jsme nejzdrženlivější a úzkostlivě dodržujeme zákon. A píšu-li tento dopis, vážená paní ministerská předsedkyně, cítím to i jako hanbu: oč přirozenější by bylo moci se s prosbou obrátit k ministerskému předsedovi méjí vlasti! Ale což je naší vinou, že se naše prosby a upozornění odrážejí jak od žulové zdi? A máme jen bezmocně hledět na otevřené bezpráví?

Já ovšem nevím, oč konkrétního bych u Vás prosila: snad nejspíš, abyste se také zastala těch nevinných lidí a zejména se přimluvila u naší vlády za ony tři ženy. Anebo možná doufám, že informace tohoto dopisu nezapadne a Vy si na ni vzpomenete při rozhodování o věcech, jejichž řešení mým ohroženým přátelům pomohou.

V každém případě Vám mnohokrát děkuji za porozumění.

S hlubokou úctou a přáním všeho dobrého

Praha dne 27.VI.1979

Eva Kantůrková
Eva Kantůrková, spisovatelka,
signatář Charty 77,
Kavčího 13,
Praha 5.



7

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 July 1979

Mr Sanders

*SM
10/7*

Dean Bryan,

Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia

Thank you for your letter of 9 July about a letter addressed to the Prime Minister by Mrs Kanturova, a signatory of Charter 77.

I enclose a Summary of Points to Make on Mrs Kanturova's letter with a note of Essential Facts on Charter 77 and the arrests in May of 10 of its signatories and on the representations we have already made to the Czech authorities. These notes are intended for use in response to any immediate enquiries or Parliamentary Questions.

We are consulting HM Ambassador at Prague on the modalities of getting any reply to Mrs Kanturova.

Yours ever

Paul

(P Lever)

Bryan Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street



LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER FROM MRS KANTUROVA OF CHARTER 77

POINTS TO MAKE

1. British Government deplore actions taken against campaigners for human rights in Czechoslovakia which are inconsistent with the Helsinki Final Act, in particular arrests in May of 10 signatories of Charter 77.

2. British Government, in concert with our partners in the Nine, have already made representations to the Czechoslovak authorities about the arrests. The matter was raised by the Lord Privy Seal with the Czechoslovak Deputy Foreign Minister in London on 2 July. Sir Ian Gilmour stressed the need for full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act. We shall try to send an observer to any trial and will continue to monitor these cases carefully.



LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER FROM MRS KANTUROVA OF CHARTER 77
ESSENTIAL FACTS

The Arrests

1. 14 arrests on 29 May of signatories of Charter 77. 4 since released. Remaining 10 all members of Committee for Defence of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS). No official announcements as yet of charges or trials. Expected that 10 will be charged under Section 98 of Criminal Code dealing with subversion of the Republic. Probably face sentences of up to 10 years.

Letter from Mrs Kanturova

A 2. Letter, dated 28 June, delivered to 10 Downing Street by Panorama team who had been filming in Czechoslovakia. Mrs Kanturova, a writer and signatory of Charter 77, describes background to arrests and asks for Prime Minister's assistance especially for 3 women arrested.

Representations by British Government

3. Agreed in Nine that separate but coordinated protests should be made to Czechoslovaks [REDACTED]. Lord Privy Seal spoke on this subject to Czechoslovak Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Jablonsky, during his visit to London on 2 July. Lord Carrington gave a written
B reply to Lord Chelwood on these cases on 9 July 1979.



170 JUL 1979



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 July 1979

Charter 77

I enclose a copy of a letter addressed to the Prime Minister by Mrs Kanturkova, one of the signatories in Prague of Charter 77 which has been delivered to No. 10 by a member of the BBC Panorama team which has been filming a programme on Czechoslovak dissidents, due to be screened on BBC1 tonight.

We shall confirm, if asked, that the Prime Minister has received a letter from Mrs. Kanturkova and that she has seen it. I should be grateful for advice on whether it would be appropriate or feasible for the Prime Minister to make any response; and on whether there is any action which might be taken, for example, by way of representations to the Czechoslovak authorities, which could be mentioned in response to further questioning, either by the press or in the House of Commons, about the Government's reaction to this letter.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Prime Minister

2

I think it is important
that we should be able to confirm that
you have personally read this letter.

I am seeking FCO advice
on the substance. *BM*

BRIAN CARTLEDGE

9/7

The attached letter was delivered by car yesterday
afternoon (Sunday) addressed to me. I had prior warning from
Michael Cockerill of Panorama.

The programme is tonight doing a piece on the persecution
of Charta 77 in Czechoslovakia and this letter was smuggled out
with the camera team.

I have acknowledged its receipt; the producers told the press
about it.

I am told that it is a signed carbon because the secret
police in Czechoslovakia have "typewriter charts" which can
identify particular typewriters from a top copy.

I don't know what the normal drill for this would be:
presumably to refer to the FCO. But I can hold the position
press-wise for the time being. The story could die.

It seems to me that the letter can't be acknowledged to
the writer.

H.L.J.

Henry L James

9 July 1979.

I have read the letter,
fully we can do something
at least about the 3 women
for a start. *amb.*

Here is the letter from
Prague.



With the Compliments

of the

British Broadcasting Corporation

M. Cockerell

MICHAEL COCKERELL, PANORAMA.

The Honourable
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
The Prime Minister of
Great Britain
10, Downing Street
L o n d o n W. 1

Dear Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,

a feeling of being far too presumptuous stands in the way of my writing this letter but forced by the greatest need I have undertaken to do so. I hope that after you have read it in its entirety I will have justified myself both in your eyes and in the eyes of my own nation.

In my own mind I congratulated you on your election and I also congratulated England on their choice; my opinion of course is not important but being further away and by viewing the situation from different horizons one is perhaps more able to recognize a strong will and clearly outlined desirable principles. It is precisely because this is the way that I see you, that I decided to write to you.

Several weeks ago ten Czech intellectuals, members of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted, a committee which is part of the movement of public involvement Charta 77, were arrested in Prague. The Committee gathered publicly accessible information about the prejudicial investigations and sentencing of some political cases and passed on its knowledge in the form of reports, notices and complaints to the state authorities with requests for a reexamination of data or a rectification of mistakes. The committee worked entirely within the boundaries of law, the Constitution of our republic, and the Helsinki treaty. The detention of ten its members and their accusation of acting subversively against the state is unjust and prejudicial.

All ten of the detainees are highly educated people; they include a world famous author, former journalists, scientists, and

clergymen. What is however most insulting is that of the ten accused three are women, one of whom is the mother of seven children. Why if nothing else, the bearing of seven human lives, and the upbringing of seven good children ought to be worthy of praise! If a man is persecuted for his convictions one can perhaps see it as a natural risk; but to detain innocent women is unfair and uncooth.

The complicated situation, in which our country has been drawn by history and by its own decisions, permit and demand, that part of the intellectual community is repressed and as a matter of fact has to do its creative work underground. Let me be understood! We patiently live in our country, determined to work even under hard conditions for the country's benefit. Our works are banned and destroyed, we are not allowed to publish, and it is precisely us who have most reason to be dissatisfied and who are most clearly aware of these reasons, who are the most restrained and anxiously uphold the law. Even the writing of this letter shames me: it would be far more natural to address my plea to the Prime Minister of my own country! But is it our own fault that our requests and representations fall upon deaf ears? And should we helplessly watch open injustice being carried out?

I myself do not know what it is specifically that I would like to ask of you: perhaps that you might also plead for those innocent people and most of all that you might intervene with our government on behalf of those three women. Or perhaps it is that I hope that the information from this letter will not be forgotten and that you will remember it when deciding about things whose solving might help my unfortunate friends.

In any case I would like to thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely

Prague, 28. 6. 1979

Eva Kentárková
Eva Kentárková, writer
signatory of Charta 77
Xaveriova 13, Prague 5

____ Grey Scale #13 _____



A

1

2

3

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12

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14

15

B

17

18

19



Inches

1

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3

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5

6

7

8

Centimetres

Colour Chart #13

Blue

Cyan

Green

Yellow

