



From the Minister

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD  
WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON SW1A 2HH

*Poland* (2)

Prime Minister

To be aware. Lord

Carry on may well wish to  
comment again.

A.S.C. 4/3

CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Downing Street  
London SW1

Ref: FCS/82/32

3 March 1982

*A. S. C.*

*[Handwritten signature]*

*p.a. AR 4/3*

POLAND: SOVIET FACTORY SHIPS

I refer to your minute of 24 February 1982.

In my opinion it is important to avoid jumping the gun on this question. As George Younger and I have already indicated, there are too many uncertainties for us now to be able to arrive at a view on the question of restricting the number of Soviet factory vessels to participate in the Minch mackerel and herring fisheries. Moreover, until it has been possible to evaluate the situation which is likely to obtain in greater detail, I must state for the record that my position is reserved on the merits of taking any restrictive action at all. We must not put ourselves into a position of doing more damage to ourselves than to the Eastern bloc. To this end we need a firm idea of the prospective size of the fisheries, the number of Eastern bloc klondykers likely to participate and the availability of other outlets for our fishermen's catch. We must also give due weight to the risk of generalised Eastern bloc withdrawal from the fishery as a reprisal if some klondykers are excluded. This would have a serious effect on the fortunes of our fishermen and the impact of unexpectedly large quantities of fish on our market would create internal problems for us, quite apart from the Third World effect to which I attach importance.

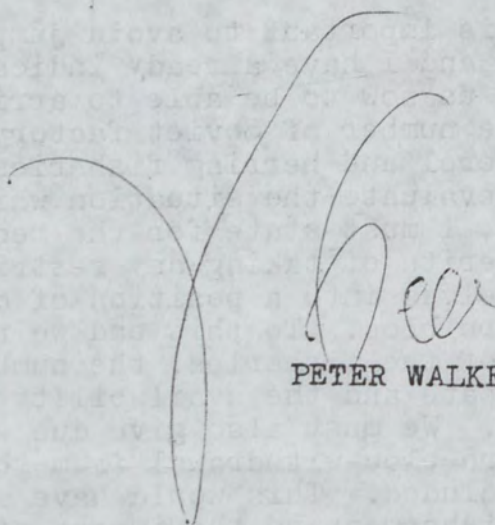
We are still a long way from having the basic facts on which to found a decision. At present the TACs to be recommended by the Commission for the fisheries are not settled, much less the share that they would propose to allocate to the United Kingdom, and until these at least are known, together with the likely participation of Eastern bloc factory vessels, I see little point in contacts between our officials. In advance

of this, I would certainly oppose any suggestion that we indicate to the Allies that we are in fact going to embark on a restrictive policy, although I appreciate the delicacy of the situation. I trust you will agree that this attitude is compatible with the decisions reached at the Prime Minister's meeting on 2 February, which referred to the possibility that restrictions could be reviewed in the summer.

Copies of this letter go to George Younger and to the Prime Minister, the Lord Privy Seal, the Secretary of State for Industry and the Chief Secretary and Minister for Trade (who were present at the meeting on 2 February) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

5 MAR 1982

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PETER WALKER