



FCS/82/139

HOME SECRETARY

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Poles in the United Kingdom

1. Thank you for your letter of 7 September about our policy on the returnability of Poles in the United Kingdom.

2. I was glad to note that you are now willing to countenance certain limited relaxations of our visa procedures for Poles wishing to visit the United Kingdom and my officials have instructed our Embassy in Warsaw accordingly.

3. These relaxations are welcome both in the interests of reducing the backlog of visa applications and in deflecting the adverse press and parliamentary criticism that the long delays have attracted. I hope that you will be prepared to review our policies again if the number of applications again threatens to outstrip the Embassy's capacity to handle them efficiently.

4. Nevertheless, I accept that relaxations such as these might increase the risk of Polish visitors seeking to take advantage of the exceptional treatment being afforded to Poles already here, in order to remain in Britain. I agree that against the background of our overall immigration policy this would be unacceptable.

5. I have carefully considered the course of action you propose, with which in principle I agree. As you will appreciate, however, we gave a commitment both to our partners in the Ten and in NATO to "contribute . . . to the solution of the problem of Polish citizens now abroad

/and unable



and unable or unwilling to return to their own country". Before giving you a definitive response therefore, I think it would be right to inform our partners what we intend and elicit their reactions.

6. I am accordingly instructing officials to discuss this at an early opportunity in the Ten and NATO. I shall then let you have a substantive reply.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'FP', with a horizontal line underneath.

(FRANCIS PYM)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
24 September 1982

Poland, Relations, Pt 8

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