



Soviet Union ^{S. Vainon} VLS

cc CO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 April 1981

Dear Anthony,

Thank you for your letter of 25 March.

The day after you wrote, I made a statement in the House: in case you have not seen the full text, I enclose a copy herewith. You will see that I have asked the Security Commission to review the security procedures and practices currently followed in the public service; and you will see from what I said the ground which I expect the Commission to cover in their review.

I am afraid that I cannot comment in detail upon the points you made in your letter of 8 January 1980. But I can assure you, as I did when I replied to that letter, that the threat is kept under constant review. Since the expulsion of 105 Soviet intelligence officers in 1971 we have maintained strict ceilings on the size of the official Soviet community in this country; and we exercise continuing vigilance about new arrivals: by no means all those who are proposed are accepted.

Yours ever

Raymond

Commander Anthony Courtney, O.B.E.

VLS



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister,

The letter below for your signature has been drafted by Sir Robert Armstrong and agreed with all the departments concerned.

There is advice contained to be that you should avoid getting into any detail in replying to Commander Courtney.

PHW

15/11



*Soviet
union*

Ref. A04731

MR. WHITMORE ✓ *W
18/4*

Commander Anthony Courtney

With your minute of 31st March you sent me a copy of Commander Courtney's letter of 25th March 1981 and related papers.

2. I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the other Departments concerned, and as a consequence I recommend that the Prime Minister should reply to Commander Courtney on the lines of the draft attached.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

15th April 1981

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
COMMANDER ANTHONY COURTNEY

Thank you for your letter of 25th March.

The day after you wrote, I made a statement in the House; in case you have not seen the full text, I enclose a copy herewith. You will see that I have asked the Security Commission to review the security procedures and practices currently followed in the public service; and you will see from what I said the ground which I expect the Commission to cover in their review.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

COMMANDER ANTHONY COURTNEY

Earlier this year Commander Anthony Courtney wrote to the Prime Minister to tell her what he thought should be done to reduce the KGB threat in this country, and the Prime Minister replied, thanking him for letting her know his views but declining to respond to them in detail. I attach copies of that exchange of correspondence. I should add that we sent copies of these letters to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office after the Prime Minister had replied to Commander Courtney, and they let us have a commentary on his proposals.

Commander Courtney has now returned to the charge in the wake of the publication of Mr. Pincher's book and is pressing the Prime Minister for a detailed answer to his earlier letter. I attach a copy of his latest letter. I should be grateful for your advice on what the Prime Minister should say in reply to him.

In case you think that she might give Commander Courtney a substantive answer, and you therefore need to consult the other Departments concerned, I am sending copies of this minute and of the attachments to Mr. Halliday (Home Office), Mr. Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), and Mr. Buckley (Civil Service Department).

G. A. WHITMORE

4

31 March 1981



3

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister.

Answer letter from Commander
Conroy.

I have asked for advice
on a reply.

JW

31 iii

and

R 27/3
Rt. Hon Mrs D. Thatcher P.C.M.P., MULBERRY HOUSE
House of Commons, URCHFONT
London, DEVIZES

WILTSHIRE

Chirton 357

25th March 1981

Dear Margaret,

May I refer to your kind letter of the 4th February 1980 and to our previous correspondence on security.

As you know, I have been working on these matters now for twenty years and I have given a lot of assistance to Chapman Pincher in the production of his new book which makes damaging allegations against both the Security Service and the Secret Intelligence Service. Referring to the last paragraph of your letter of the 4th February, may I ask you now, please, to respond in detail to the points I made in my letter of the 8th January. Only by action such as I propose can we make any immediate counter to the Soviet espionage threat. It will involve action within the Foreign Office and the Services referred to which will be highly unpopular and I shall be glad to be associated with any body you may appoint to carry out a thorough investigation. May I add two personal points which would come much better from anyone but myself. The first is that the Soviet officials in Moscow gave me their full confidence when I was working with them there in 1941/42 to the extent of using me as the only interpreter in our rather highly technical staff meetings. Secondly, my activities in the House of Commons in 1959-1965 must have frightened the Russians significantly to have achieved the dangerous reaction of attacking a Conservative Member of Parliament in the way they did. I still consider that the Party let me down badly in those days, not to

Cont....

speak of Harold Wilson who naturally wanted the Harrow East seat for Labour in the 1966 election and, of course, got it with the help of Ted Heath and Theo Constantine.

You have my full personal loyalty and I will do all I can to help you in your present predicament over Security. Surely you must now be aware that your Foreign Office advisers are absolutely unreliable on matters of security.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony