



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref:

Your ref:

*Home Affairs*

17 March 1980

\* *Time these ffs were omitted with their file.*

*ls. - Ant 17/3*

*Dear Colin*

INSCRIPTION PROPOSED BY YALTA VICTIMS  
MEMORIAL APPEAL STEERING COMMITTEE

Thank you for your letter of 14 March.

My Secretary of State met Lord Bethell, Sir Bernard Braine and the Hon John Jolliffe today to discuss the inscription for this proposed memorial.

Sir Bernard Braine stressed that the Appeal Steering Committee were anxious to operate within the guidelines set out by the Prime Minister in her letter of 21 February to Lord Bethell, and that they had therefore agreed to omit the words "by Britain and her allies" from the inscription. He emphasised their view, however, that their desired wording as put forward in Lord Bethell's letter of 29 February to Mr Heseltine was completely factual and was therefore uncontroversial. The Committee could not accept the words "after their return to their homelands", since they implied voluntary action; and Lord Bethell was also insistent that they could not accept the alternative wording "after their repatriation" which my Secretary of State proposed at today's meeting, since, Lord Bethell stated, those sent back to the USSR at the end of the war included some who were not Soviet citizens.

My Secretary of State recognised that the use of the word "repatriation" was open to objection on the grounds of this deficiency, but stressed that he could not agree to the inclusion of the phrase "delivered against their will" in the inscription. Sir Bernard accepted this constraint and suggested one further possible wording which the Committee could agree to: "... after being returned to their homelands at the conclusion of the second world war." Mr Heseltine held out no hope that the Government would agree this, but said that he would wish to consult his colleagues and would respond to this suggestion in the next few days.

I would be grateful if you could let me know Mr Blaker's views on this latest suggested wording by Wednesday 19 March. You should be aware that Sir Bernard Braine warned that unless agreement on the wording for the inscription was quickly reached, the circumstances of the Government's "hesitation" could be expected to become widely known among those who supported the memorial appeal.

I am copying this to Michael Alexander (No 10) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely*

*Paul Bristow*

P N BRISTOW  
Private Secretary

17 MAR 1969





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Ka. *Paul* - 14/3

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

14 March 1980

Dear Paul,

Thank you for your letter of 6 March.

To take your final point first, Mr Blaker thinks we should avoid referring publicly to a 'Memorial to the Victims of Yalta' since the expression implies an accusation that the British and American Governments were somehow accomplices of the Soviet Government in this matter at the time the Yalta agreement was signed.

Mr Blaker still believes that inclusion of the word 'delivered' in the inscription, even if 'against their will' is omitted, would amount to criticism of the British Governments of the time. This is because the inscription would then in effect be saying that British governments were responsible for the imprisonment and death of thousands of innocent people. If Lord Bethell cannot accept the words 'after their return', Mr Blaker thinks that 'after their repatriation' would just be an acceptable alternative, even though this may carry some implication of British responsibility. The inscription Mr Blaker is now proposing therefore reads as follows:

'This memorial was placed here by members of Parliament of all parties, and others, to commemorate the thousands of innocent men, women and children from Russia and other Eastern European nations who were imprisoned and died at the hands of Communist governments after their repatriation at the conclusion of the Second World War.'

Mr Blaker's view is that we cannot go further towards meeting Lord Bethell without being in breach of the Prime Minister's ruling. Indeed, the inscription cited above will already certainly be considered by some people to be both controversial and critical of previous British governments.

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P N Bristow Esq  
PS/Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment  
Marsham Street



If Lord Bethell cannot accept the above inscription therefore, and if he continues in particular to insist on 'delivered' or 'delivery', Mr Blaker believes that the Prime Minister's ruling would mean that a monument so inscribed would be inappropriate for erection on Crown Land.

As you know, Lord Carrington does not consider that the question whether a particular form of words imputes guilt to previous British Governments or not, is essentially one of foreign policy.

... I am sending copies of this letter to Michael Alexander (No 10) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

*betin*  
C A Munro  
PS/Mr Blaker



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref:

Your ref:

6 March 1980

*Dear Charles*

MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF YALTA

Thank you for your letter of 4 March. You will have seen that my Secretary of State wrote to Lord Bethell on 5 March, inviting him to consider a revised wording for the inscription in line with Mr Blaker's comments as recorded in your letter.

Lord Bethell has again spoken to me by phone and, while he acknowledges that the latest wording which my Secretary of State has proposed goes some way towards meeting the wording which he and Sir Bernard Braine have pressed for, he has said that he cannot accept the phrase "after their return ....". He has commented that this form of words could be taken to refer to groups of Russians or East Europeans other than those whom the proposed memorial is intended to commemorate, and he has stressed his, and his colleagues', desire for an inscription which would make it clear that those commemorated did not return to Russia and Eastern Europe voluntarily. He has repeated that he would wish to include the word "delivered (to imprisonment and death)", although, if I have properly understood him, he would not insist on the phrase "against their will".

My Secretary of State has not so far met Lord Bethell and his colleagues to discuss this matter, but at Lord Bethell's request we have now provisionally arranged a meeting for Monday 17 March. This would not be necessary, however if Mr Heseltine were able to go any further towards the position now taken up by Lord Bethell. I would therefore be grateful if you could let me know in the next few days whether Mr Blaker sees scope for a consensus and, if not, what line my Secretary of State should take in meeting Lord Bethell and his colleagues.

One final point. This correspondence (including Lord Carrington's letter to Sir Bernard Braine of 27 February) has been exchanged under the heading "Memorial to the Victims of Yalta". It is not clear to me whether Lord Bethell and his colleagues regard this

as a mutually acceptable description; but it would be helpful if you could also let me know whether Mr Blaker sees any reason to object to the public use of this phrase in referring to the memorial.

I am copying this to Michael Alexander (No 10) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely*

*Paul Bristow*

P N BRISTOW  
Private Secretary

Charles A Hamilton Esq  
PS/Mr Peter Blaker MP