

Soviet Union JS

BF 4-8-80

9 June 1980

DISSIDENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

You forwarded to me under cover of your letter of 3 June a draft reply to go from the Prime Minister to Professor Schapiro and Mr. Reddaway about the current campaign against dissidents in the Soviet Union. I enclose a copy of the text of this letter in the form in which it issued. As you will see, the tone of the letter is now rather more positive.

I look forward to receiving from you soon a letter setting out our policy towards the Madrid Review Conference. It will be important for your letter to state clearly how we intend to handle Basket III issues.

MA

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SC



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 June 1980

Dear Professor Schapiro,

Thank you and Mr. Reddaway very much for your letter of 14 May.

I agree with what you say about the severity of the present wave of repression against dissidents and about the threat it poses to the continued existence of a number of dissenting groups. We in the West have a permanent responsibility to do all we can to help those who are being persecuted in the Soviet Union. But that responsibility is now even greater than before. Private organisations and individuals have a crucial role to play in publicising what is happening. So do Governments. As you recognise, Ministers have made a point in recent speeches of drawing attention to this subject, particularly in the context of Soviet preparations for the Olympic Games. I have done the same in Parliament myself, and the Government has been making private representations to the Soviet authorities about these matters. These efforts will continue.

I was interested to learn of your analysis of the effects of the campaign by President Carter and others in 1977 against the persecution of dissidents. I look forward to seeing the article when it is completed. I sympathise with your suggestion for a major new campaign led by Western leaders. But it will be essential to ensure that the timing is right and that co-operation amongst major Western leaders is assured. I think the chances would be better nearer the time of the Madrid Review Conference of the CSCE, and will ensure that your suggestion is borne in mind as the date of the Conference draws closer.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Professor Leonard Schapiro

JS



Relype for signature

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Richard
Typical
Ever low efforts
concern its origin
F.O. reply
cont-
not.

Thank you and Mr. Reddaway very much for your letter of 14 May.

with what you say about the severity of
I agree ~~that~~ *and about the that it threatens it poses to* the present wave of repression against dissidents is ~~extremely severe and is threatening~~ the continued existence of a number of dissenting groups. We in the West ~~have~~ *a firm* undoubtedly ~~have an increased~~ responsibility ~~at present~~ *to do all we can to help those who are being persecuted.* Private organisations and individuals have a crucial role to play in publicising what is happening. So do Governments. As you recognise, Ministers ~~(including some whom you do not mention)~~ have made a point in recent speeches of drawing attention to this subject, particularly ~~as an aspect~~ *in the context* of Soviet preparations for the Olympic Games. I have done the same in Parliament myself, and the Government ~~of course~~ *has been making* ~~continued to make~~ private representations to the Soviet authorities about these matters. *These efforts will continue.*

I was interested to learn of your analysis of the effects of the campaign by President Carter and others in 1977 against ~~the persecution of dissidents.~~ *I work forward to seeing the article when it is completed. (sympathetic with)* Your suggestion ~~of a major new~~ *of* campaign led by Western leaders ~~has many attractions~~ *it will* But timing ~~would be important as would co-operation amongst major Western~~ *be essential to ensure that the timing is right and that* leaders. ~~A new campaign could backfire against those it is intended to help if it were mishandled.~~ *is announced* I think the chances would be better nearer the time of the Madrid Review Conference of the CSCE, and will ~~certainly bear~~ *ensure that* your suggestion ~~in mind~~ *(is borne)* as the date of the Conference draws closer.

Professor Leonard Schapiro.

JPS
att

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Type for signature

PWS

3 June 1980

Dear Michael,

Human Rights in the Soviet Union

Thank you for your letter of 16 May enclosing one to the Prime Minister from Professor Leonard Schapiro and Mr Peter Reddaway of the London School of Economics.

Since it is notoriously difficult to establish the effectiveness of Western campaigns in support of Soviet dissidents, FCO officials have taken an opportunity to ask Messrs Schapiro and Reddaway about their finding that in 1977 the human rights campaign led by President Carter caused a wave of arrests of dissidents to be curbed. The evidence, according to Messrs Schapiro and Reddaway, is that:-

- (a) there was a leak via dissident sources of a private statement by a Soviet official that 50 arrests were planned;
- (b) only about half that number of dissidents were arrested;
- (c) various dissidents attributed the Soviet failure to arrest more people to Western pressure.

This is interesting but not conclusive. Moreover, there are differences between 1977 and the present. At that time East-West relations were far better and SALT II was under active negotiation, whereas now relations are notably bad in the wake of Afghanistan. The Soviet leaders therefore have fewer motives now for heeding a Western campaign in favour of dissidents. We think that Messrs Schapiro and Reddaway would accept this but would argue that a major immediate campaign led by Western leaders in favour of dissidents would do no harm and might conceivably do some good.

Lord Carrington sees the arguments for a major campaign to try to moderate the very severe wave of arrests now taking place in the USSR. Such a campaign, in order to have any chance of being effective, would need to be led by major leaders. At normal times the arguments for it might be conclusive. But the most important current Western objective in relations with the USSR should be to increase pressure for a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. The best time to look at the possibility of a human rights campaign would be nearer to the Madrid Review Conference of CSCE beginning in November. Meanwhile, the recently increased attention paid to this subject in Ministerial speeches should be maintained.

I enclose a draft reply to Professor Schapiro and Mr Reddaway.

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

For ever JPS
(G G H Walden)
Private Secretary

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

PRIME MINISTER

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Professor Leonard Schapiro

and

Copies to:

Peter Reddaway Esq

London School of Economics & Political Science

Houghton Street

LONDON WC2A 2AE

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you very much for your letter of 14

May.

CAVEAT.....

I am interested by your conclusions about the effects of the campaign by President Carter and others in 1977 against persecution of dissidents.

As you say, the present wave of repression against dissidents is extremely severe and is seriously threatening the continued existence of a number of dissenting groups. I agree that we in the West have an increased responsibility at present to do all we can to help those who are being persecuted. Private organisations and individuals have a crucial role to play in publicising what is happening. So do Governments and, as you recognise, Ministers (including ^{some} others whom you do not mention) have made a point in recent speeches of drawing attention to this subject, particularly as an aspect of Soviet preparations for the Olympic Games. I have done the same in Parliament myself, and the Government also, of course, makes private representations to the Soviet authorities about these matters.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Your suggestion of a new major campaign led by Western leaders has many attractions. Timing would be important, however, as would cooperation amongst major Western leaders, if such a campaign were not to

/backfire

backfire against those it is intended to help.

I shall certainly bear your suggestion in mind as we get closer to the Madrid Review Conference of the CSCE.

FILE

VLB

Prof. SCHAPIRO
Mr. Reddaway

BU 22/5

Chase
V 20/5

16 May 1980

Yes please.

Paul

I enclose a copy of a letter received by the Prime Minister from Professor Leonard Schapiro and Mr. Peter Reddaway about human rights in the Soviet Union.

I should be grateful if you would let me have the text of a draft reply which the Prime Minister might send to Professor Schapiro and Mr. Reddaway. It would be helpful if this could reach me by close of play on Thursday, 22 May.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

JS

FILE

VLB

16 May 1980

I am replying on the Prime Minister's behalf to your letter to her of 14 May about the current campaign to suppress human rights in the Soviet Union.

Your letter is receiving attention and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

Professor Leonard Schapiro

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