


Soviet Union
—

23 October 1980

You wrote to me on 8 October about a request made to the Lord Chancellor by Professor Sir Brian Pippard that he should allow his name to be used in an advertisement in the Times condemning Soviet oppression of scientists. You will since have seen Roderic Lyne's letter to me of 21 October. The Prime Minister has herself seen Roderic Lyne's letter and has approved the advice set out in it.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

A.E. Shaw, Esq.,
Lord Chancellor's Office.





Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Lord Carrington advises that Lord Hailsham should not join other fellows of the Royal Society in signing an advertisement condemning Soviet victimisation of scientists wishing to emigrate. The reasons are at 'A'. I do not think Lord Hailsham will object. Agree?

21 October 1980

Dear Michael,

Ans 21/x Yes

Alastair Shaw sent Paul Lever a copy of his letter to you of 8 October seeking advice on whether Lord Hailsham should agree to his name being used in an advertisement in The Times condemning Soviet victimisation of scientists who wished to emigrate.

You will remember that the Prime Minister decided in July that, with the exception of the Secretary of State for Industry, Ministers should not sign an advertisement in The Times in support of persecuted Jews in the Soviet Union. The present case is not entirely comparable but it raises the same general difficulties: Lord Hailsham's agreement to Sir Brian Pippard's proposal would set a precedent and make it more difficult in the future for Ministers to resist pressure to associate themselves with cases which were not so deserving as the present one. It would also be odd for Lord Hailsham to sign an advertisement urging the Government to adopt a certain course of action when he is himself a member of the Government. Lord Carrington therefore thinks that Lord Hailsham should not allow his name to be associated with the advertisement even though he considers the cause to be an excellent one.

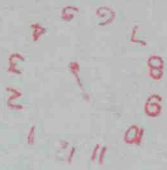
'A'

I am sending a copy of this letter to Alastair Shaw.

Yours ever
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
No 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1



22 OCT 1980

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



HOUSE OF LORDS,
SW1A 0PW

8th October, 1980

M.O.B. Alexander Esq.,
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1.

Dear Michael,

The Lord Chancellor has asked me to write to you about the appeal by Professor Sir Brian Pippard asking all Fellows of the Royal Society to agree to the use of their names in an advertisement in The Times condemning Soviet oppression of Scientists (copy enclosed).

Lord Hailsham would have agreed to this without hesitation had he been a private individual, but as Lord Chancellor he would be grateful for your advice and that of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as to whether he may do so. A copy of this therefore goes to Paul Lever.

Yours sincerely

Alistair Shaw

A.E. SHAW

HOUSE OF LORDS,
SW1A 0PW

*With the Compliments of the
Lord Chancellor's
Private Secretary*

I am sorry that this was
omitted in error from
Mr Shaw's letter of the 8th.

10130

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From PROFESSOR SIR BRIAN PIPPARD, F.R.S.



September 1980

I am writing to urge all Fellows of the Royal Society to sign the enclosed petition in order to show publicly the massive support the government could rely on when conducting their private negotiations in Madrid. Because so many of the Russian victims are Jews, and the strongest demands for action have come from Jews in the West, it has unfortunately been all too easy for the whole movement to be dismissed on occasion as some rather disreputable off-shoot of Zionism. For this reason I particularly address my plea to non-Jews, like myself. No one should doubt the depths of malice which petty officials, encouraged by the central authority, have employed to break the spirits of those unfortunates, often elderly and sick, who are guilty of no crime but only the error of longing for a freedom that we enjoy without having to strive for it. I wish I could believe that by maintaining cultural contacts we might be able to exert a beneficial influence; but conversations with Russian scientists have made clear that they regard this as a delusion. Some, indeed, not themselves victimized, even recommend the total cutting off of all scientific communication on the part of Western scientists; they would feel the deprivation grievously, but in their view it offers the only chance of ultimately enforcing a more humane attitude. Ever since the cases of Orlov, Shcharansky and Sakharov the argument for such positive action has been gaining support in the West, though not so much in Britain as in some other countries. There is, however, no implication of support for extremism in the letter you are asked to sign, but only that you are willing to be seen encouraging like-minded men of conscience in the British delegation to Madrid to lose no opportunity for helping our oppressed colleagues.

Brian Pippard

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR VICTIMISED SOVIET SCIENTISTS

2 Frogal Rise, London N.W.3.

Today, representatives of governments are meeting at the Madrid Review Conference to continue the dialogue which began in Helsinki 1975. Soon their discussions will reach Baskets II and III concerning Human Rights and the promises for freedom of the individual which were made by the participating States at Helsinki. The cases listed below are representative of the 250 Soviet scientists and engineers known to us who are all in the same predicament:-

Dr.S.Alber, physicist; Prof.Y.Alpert, physicist; Dr.J.Begun, electronics engineer; Drs.I. & V.Brailovsky, mathematicians; Dr.E.Finkelshtein, physicist; Dr.D.Fradkin, mathematician; Drs.G. & I.Goldshtein, physicists; Dr.A.Ioffe, mathematician; Dr.G.Khasin, mathematician; Dr.V.Kislik, physicist; Drs. I. & N.Kogan, electronics and technical scientists; Dr.Y.Kosharovskiy, radio physicist; Dr.A.Lerner, cyberneticist; Dr.N.Meiman, physicist; V.Prestin, electrical engineer; Dr.V.Raiz, molecular biologist; Dr.L.Roitburd, aeronautical engineer; Dr.V.Shakhnovski, mathematician; A.Shcharansky, computer scientist; V.Slepak, radio engineer; Dr.A.Taratuta, mathematician.

These people have been dismissed from their posts, or have been demoted; have suffered indignities and harassments; had their names removed from their publications; refused access to scientific libraries and laboratories; barred from attending conferences at home and abroad; and many have even been imprisoned simply because they wanted to exercise their basic human right to emigrate from their own country. They are not allowed to work and they are not allowed to leave.

In addition the following have suffered exile or imprisonment because they formed a watchdog committee in order to ensure that their own government honoured its undertaking to the Helsinki agreement:-

Drs.A.Sakharov, Y.Orlov, I.Zisls, physicists; T.Velikanova, M.Morozov, mathematicians; I.Dyadkin, geophysicist; S.Kovalov, biologist.

We therefore urge our governments to press the Soviet Union to release these colleagues and by so doing, honour its Helsinki commitment.

I agree that my name should be used in this advertisement in THE TIMES

SIGNATURE

We shall be grateful if you will fill out the particulars below in block letters since signatures are often difficult to decipher

NAME AND TITLES
ADDRESS

N.B. PLEASE RETURN THIS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS

This petition has been sent to Fellows of the Royal Society and the final advertisement will include signatures from France, Scandinavia and the U.S.A.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION/SALFORD

Britain attacked for lack of opposition to persecution of scientists abroad

Britain's scientific establishment was strongly criticized at the British Association yesterday for ignoring the persecution of scientists abroad, particularly in the Eastern bloc and South America.

Professor John Ziman, director of the H. H. Wills physics laboratory at Bristol University said: "We all know perfectly well that oppressive acts touching directly upon scientists and their work are taking place every day all over the world".

Yet the topic was seldom discussed by the British Association. British scientists had not had a public debate on the issue for nearly seven years; other countries had a far better record of opposition to such repression. "For a country that prides itself on its moral and legal conscientiousness, this is a disgraceful neglect of duty".

Professor Ziman, a fellow of the Royal Society, reserved his strongest criticisms for scientific societies. "How can they stand aside and ignore events that put their whole purposes in jeopardy? How can their governing bodies conceal from themselves that their refusal to give a positive lead in such matters can only be interpreted as callous acquiescence to

From Pearce Wright,
Science Editor,
and Nicholas Timmins.

the enemies of science and learning?

"The apologists for quietism assert that we must not open the door to controversial actions like boycott that might disturb the peace of our comfortable little clubs or just possibly cause more harm than good." But a total boycott, he said, was at one extreme of a wide spectrum of possible responses.

Other speakers at the symposium suggested measures which included writing letters to the heads of foreign learned societies, making press statements, publicizing meetings held by such scientists in their own countries, and refusing to attend meetings or invite scientists from learned societies in countries where scientists are repressed.

Professor Ziman said: "It is up to us to make clear that we scientists are not indifferent to the ill-treatment of Russian, Czechoslovak, Polish, Romanian and other scientists who dare to take the Helsinki agreement at its face value, or to the cat and mouse

treatment of Jewish scientists who have sought for years to emigrate from the Soviet Union."

It was said that science should not be drawn into politics. But today, "science is not just in politics, it has become a whole branch of politics"; it was, for example, inextricable from the arms race.

The motive for silence was not prudence but embarrassment. "It is embarrassing to imagine that people just like ourselves are being murdered, or tortured, or imprisoned, or harassed for doing what we are supposed to be doing; that is, diligently pursuing scientific knowledge, maintaining honest intellectual standards or just trying to live decently according to their own spiritual lights without harm to their fellows."

Professor John Primack, professor of physics at California University said that military oppression was the biggest cause of the great brain drain of South American scientists, and Professor John Charap, professor of physics at Queen Mary College, London, cited the way in which letters and other pressure had helped Mr Yuri Goldand, a physicist at Moscow University, to regain his job.

Similar accounts appeared the same day in THE GUARDIAN and THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, which next day had a leader on the subject, concluding:

Considerable concern is expressed from time to time about horrors perpetrated by the Russian authorities on innocent citizens who dare speak their mind on politics or religion. Only earlier this year, Amnesty International gave details on the 400 more Soviets jailed and the 100 more put in mental hospitals since its last report in 1975. But not so many in the West know of the extent to which the authorities restrict every step of the Soviet scientist and scholar. In the latest issue of INDEX ON CENSORSHIP, MARK POPOVSKY gives some details. In addition to listing a number of those who have been imprisoned, he states that after each visit abroad a Soviet scientist has to write a report for the KGB and the military; that he is forbidden to reveal Soviet figures or statistics (including even the mesh which Soviet fishermen use); and that the object is to take from the West all the information possible and give as little as possible in return. These are matters which Western scientists ought to discuss openly and publicly. Silence does Western interests—and science as a whole—a disservice.