

Papers filed  
in CF



cc FCO HL

Sa Uruse

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

1 February, 1982.

Dear Mrs. Rigal.

Thank you for your letter of 18 January, in which you raise the sad case of Anatoly Shcharansky.

The Government are deeply concerned about the abuse of human rights in the Soviet Union and about the particular case of Mr. Shcharansky.

I take a close personal interest in these matters. I met Mrs. Shcharansky when she visited this country in April last year, and I mentioned her husband's case in a speech to the Board of Deputies of British Jews on 15 December 1981.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have on a number of occasions raised this case. For example Lord Carrington referred to Mr. Shcharansky during his Churchill Memorial Speech in Luxembourg on 27 October, and Lord Trefgarne raised the case with the Soviet Ambassador on 23 November 1981.

Our delegation to the Madrid meeting to review the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act have repeatedly raised Mr. Shcharansky's case both in plenary sessions and privately with the leader of the Soviet delegation. We are all naturally disturbed about the recent reports of the worsening conditions of Mr. Shcharansky's imprisonment. The appalling treatment he has suffered is an affront to basic human values and demonstrates Soviet disregard for the commitments they undertook in signing the Final Act.

/ The news

SD

The news concerning Mr. Shcharansky and the position of Soviet Jewry in general is unremittingly bleak. We shall continue nevertheless to give what support we can to his cause and that of the many others who suffer for their beliefs in the Soviet Union.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Rigel

Mrs. Margaret Rigel

Soviet Union



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Dear John.

You enclosed with your letter of 19 January one to the Prime Minister from Mrs Margaret Rigal, co-Chairman of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry. As requested, I enclose a draft reply.

Yours ever.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Francis Richards', written in a cursive style.

(F N Richards)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: ~~minute~~/letter/teletype/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister.

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Mrs Margaret Rigal  
co-Chairman

Secret

Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry

Confidential

148 Granville Road

Restricted

LONDON

Unclassified

NW2

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your letter of 18 January, in which you raise the sad case of Anatoly Shcharansky.

CAVEAT.....

~~As you know,~~ <sup>T</sup> the Government are deeply concerned about the abuse of human rights in the Soviet Union, and <sup>particular case</sup> ~~of course~~ about the plight of Mr Shcharansky.

Type please

ADL 29.1

I myself take a close personal interest in these matters. I met Mrs Shcharansky when she visited this country in April last year, and I mentioned her husband's case in a speech to the Board of Deputies of British Jews on 15 December 1981.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have on a number of occasions raised this case. For example Lord Carrington referred to Mr Shcharansky during his Churchill Memorial Speech in Luxembourg on 27 October, and Lord Trefgarne raised the case with the Soviet Ambassador on 23 November 1981.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

/Our

Our delegation to the Madrid meeting to review the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act have repeatedly raised Mr Shcharansky's case both in plenary sessions and privately with the leader of the Soviet delegation. We are all naturally disturbed about the recent reports of the worsening conditions of Mr Shcharansky's imprisonment. The appalling treatment he has suffered is an affront to basic human values and demonstrates Soviet disregard for the commitments they undertook in signing the Final Act.

The <sup>views</sup> ~~view~~ concerning Mr Shcharansky and the position of Soviet Jewry in general is unremittingly bleak. We shall continue nevertheless to give what support we can to his cause and that of the many others who suffer for their beliefs in the Soviet Union.

ML  $\frac{29}{1}$

R M

Soviet Union

19 January, 1982

Anatoly Shcharansky

I enclose a letter which the Prime Minister has received about the above from Mrs Margaret Rigal, one of the Co-Chairmen of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry. I should be grateful if you could provide a draft reply for signature by the Prime Minister. It would be helpful if this could reach me by Friday, 22 January.

A. J. COLES

E N Richards, Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

MM

18 January, 1982

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 18 January about Mr Anatoly Shcharansky. A reply will be sent to you in due course.

A. J. COLES

Mrs Margaret Rigal  
(Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry)

PPS  
R19/11

# WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

148 Granville Road, London NW2  
Tel: 01-458 7147

MR/RE

18th January, 1982.

The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister  
10, Downing Street  
London, S.W.1.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

We were all delighted and relieved to hear that your son was found safe and well last week. We had all been sharing your anxiety and we should like now to send you and Mr. Thatcher our congratulations and best wishes.

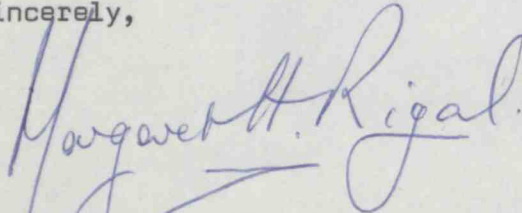
I am enclosing an appeal from Ida Milgrom together with a report by Avital SHCHARANSKY on her husband's present situation. I know that you have already expressed your sympathy with Avital, but I am sure that after your anxieties of the last week you will feel even more acutely how much Ida Milgrom is suffering.

I have included an article from "The Times" which reports the request made to Mr. Alexander Haigh by Prime Minister Begin that he should take up the case of Shcharansky and I should be most grateful if you would ensure that your representatives also inform the Soviet administration once again of your concern for Anatoly. I know that his name has been put forward on many occasions but it would seem that he cannot survive for much longer in his present conditions and that only a concerted effort by all the Western powers can save his life.

I very much hope that you will be able to bring the same relief to Ida Milgrom which you yourself must be feeling in the knowledge that your son is safe and well.

With many thanks for all your help and understanding, and with best wishes to you and all your family,

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Rigal  
on behalf of  
Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry

Enc.



# WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

# 35'S

12th January, 1982.

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

148 Granville Road, London NW2  
Tel: 01-458 7147

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AN APPEAL TO THE WORLD BY IDA MILGROM,  
MOTHER OF ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY.

This follows after her two-hour visit,  
the first in one and half years.

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In March 1977, my son, Anatoly Shcharansky was arrested and charged with espionage for the C.I.A. On July 14, 1978, the trial by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, which resembled a farce like the Dreyfus Trial, gave him a brutal and unfounded sentence of thirteen years deprivation of freedom - three of them in prison and ten in the camps of strict regime.

At the trial my son declared that his case was trumped up in order to crush the Jewish emigration movement in the Soviet Union. In spite of blackmail and threats of capital punishment, he did not agree to plead 'guilty' and said that the accusations were absurd.

Anatoly spent three terrible years in prison and was then transferred to a camp. However, the lawlessness and humiliations against him are still going on. Now we have learnt that since January through to October 1981, Anatoly was isolated in solitary confinement in the internal camp prison, while in the year of October 1980 through to October 1981, he spent 185 days in the ill-famed special punishment cell, of which 75 days were in succession.\*

The food ration in the internal camp prison is a starvation diet and contains no meat and no butter. In the special punishment cell this ration is given only once in two days. In this way my son was tortured for 93 days by full starvation and the same period of time by partial starvation. As a result he reached full physical exhaustion. A medical emergency forced them to take him, unconscious, to the prison hospital from which he was returned to the special punishment cell.

At the end of October 1981, in the camp where he was confined, there was another scene of that grotesque farce. Anatoly Shcharansky was again put on trial in the presence of the Procurator and the Judge and two members of the Court - he was without a lawyer. The court hearing lasted five minutes. The so-called trial made the punishment more severe, which was already terrible before that. This was because my son will still not plead guilty to the charge made against him in 1978.

My son is again sentenced to three years in prison. They want to break my son, physically and morally.

Is there any means in the world which can prevent the death of an innocent victim of arbitrariness?

Ida Milgrom

Moscow

7th January 1982

\*The notorious special punishment cell (Kartser) is such a severe punishment that even by Soviet law no prisoner can be confined in it for more than fifteen days. The guards observed this law by taking Shcharansky out of the cell after fifteen days and returned him three hours later. They performed this outrageous charade four times.



# WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

148 Granville Road, London NW2  
Tel: 01-458 7147

## REPORT on ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY from AVITAL

following a telephone conversation with IDA MILGROM.

For the first time in a year-and-a-half, Anatoly Shcharansky's mother, Ida Milgrom, and brother Leonid, were permitted to visit him. The meeting took place in Chistopol Prison where Anatoly was sitting in a glass enclosed cell with a KGB guard at his side. This was his story:-

On October 18th, he was working as a welder in the camp factory when, without any explanation, he was stopped from doing this work and was ordered to begin work in an extraordinarily dangerous place where all prisoners avoid working. He refused and was then sent to a punishment cell (solitary confinement) for fifteen days.

On November 18th, Anatoly was sent to do sanitary work in the sewerage system. This meant an improvement in his daily food rations, but involved transferring an old sick prisoner to a harder job. The sole aim of the authorities was to incite the other prisoners against Anatoly. He refused and was again sent to the punishment cell for fifteen days.

On December 3rd, 1980, at the beginning of Chanukah, Anatoly lit Chanukah candles as usual, which greatly agitated the prison authorities who ordered him to put out the candles immediately. Anatoly refused on the grounds that it was his rudimentary duty and privilege as a Jew to perform the customs of his people. Again he was sent to the punishment cell. In addition, his prayer book, a present from his wife Avital, and his Jewish calendar were confiscated. After repeated requests that these cherished items be returned, he was promised by the prison authorities that he would get them back. A short time later he was informed that his case had been discussed by the KGB and orders had been issued not to return the prayer book. It was as a result of this incident that it was decided that Anatoly was a disciplinary problem and he was sentenced to six months in the inner prison where the conditions are considerably harder than in the camp.

His sentence began on January 13th. During his stay in the inner prison Anatoly continued to demand his prayer book. Amongst other actions he wrote to the Soviet authorities saying that there is no Soviet law laying down conditions for having prayer books. He was informed in reply that Soviet Russia is really at war against religion and his punishment is an official result; in institutions no religious practices will be permitted. In addition, at the present moment he is in an educational institution and no educational extremes would be tolerated.

Anatoly replied that according to Soviet law each individual has freedom of religion and freedom of conviction. He began to strike as a protest and was sentenced to fifteen days in the punishment cell in addition to the six months in the inner prison. When he finished the fifteen days in the cell, he again demanded that his prayer book be returned and refused to work until he received it. In reprisal he was thrown into the punishment cell for another fifteen days. This harrowing struggle continued until the end of August 1981. In all, Anatoly spent 185 days in a punishment cell, 75 days of them consecutively, an unprecedented ordeal even in Russia. During this period Anatoly suffered from nutritional deprivation to the point of starvation. In one incident he was barely able to inform a fellow prisoner that he was on the verge of collapse, before he actually lost consciousness. Since food is given only every other day in the punishment cell and this was not a food day, Anatoly was only given an injection to sustain him but no additional food. After four days in this condition he was taken to the intensive care unit of the camp hospital and received emergency treatment.

Anatoly spent thirty-three days in hospital recuperating; from there he was returned to the punishment cell.

From there he was sent to an open trial. Present were the prosecution witnesses, the prosecutor who read the charge, the judge and the defendant.

- The accusations: 1). The defendant has not yet confessed to the crime he was convicted of in the celebrated trial in July 1978, according to which he maintained connections with the C.I.A. - Such confession would have indicated satisfactory re-education.
- 2). He was a bad influence on the other prisoners.

Both accusations are groundless of course, since Anatoly was most of the time in solitary confinement, he had no influence at all on his fellow-prisoners, and as for not confessing to his crime, he has been punished for it. The trial lasted five minutes. The judge sentenced Anatoly to three more years in Chistopol Prison.

When Anatoly arrived in Chistopol he was subjected to two months' particularly harsh treatment, for being sent again to prison. Anatoly wrote to Brezhnev saying that according to the decision of the 26th Conference of the Communist Party, religion is permissible in the Soviet Union and he demanded the return of his prayer book. The letter was confiscated because Anatoly claimed to be a member of the Human Rights Committee which does not exist as far as the authorities are concerned.

Anatoly replied that he was charged at his original trial with being a member of this Committee, so it obviously exists. Last March two KGB agents arrived from Moscow to talk to Anatoly, but he refused. They offered to do things for him in Moscow if he co-operated. He refused, explaining that they did not seem to be appropriate agents to this end. Anatoly wrote to the Synagogue of Moscow, requesting that they send him a Bible. He received word that his request had been received, but he had not yet received a Bible. Anatoly's mother says that in spite of Anatoly's exhausted physical condition he spirit remains high.

At the end of the conversation Mrs. Milgrom made an emotional plea to the world. The tortures continue, the libels continue, they are trying to break my son physically and to destroy his spirit - is there no way to stop this arbitrary penalty?

\* \* \* \*

Given to Rita Eker  
on Sunday, 10th Jan. 1982

THE TIMES TUESDAY JANUARY 12 1982

## Begin wants US to take case of Soviet dissident

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem, Jan 11

The Israeli Government announced today that Mr Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister, will formally request Mr Alexander Haig, the American Secretary of State, to take up the case of Mr Anatoly Shcharansky, who is serving a 13-year sentence in the Soviet Union for allegedly cooperating with the Central Intelligence Agency. The request will be made when Mr Haig arrives in Israel on Thursday.

The announcement coincided with the release of a number of grim details of the conditions being endured by Mr Shcharansky, a dissident who last week received his first visit from relatives in 18 months.

According to his wife Avital (who was expelled from the Soviet Union the day after her wedding in 1974) the new information has cast serious doubts on his ability to survive his sentence. Recently this has been amended to include a longer period in prison, rather than the less harsh surroundings of a labour camp.

Mrs Shcharansky spoke emotionally about the visit which her husband's 75-year-old mother and his 35-year-old brother were allowed to pay to Chistopol prison last week. The conversation took place by internal telephone through a double glass partition and was monitored by an agent of the secret police, the KGB.

It emerged that Mr Shcharansky had spent 130 days of 1981 in solitary confinement largely because of punishments imposed for his determined efforts to practice the Jewish religion inside jail.

Conditions in the cell were described to correspondents by Mr Yosef Mendelevich, another prisoner who was allowed to come to Israel last year after nearly 11 years in Soviet prisons including Chistopol.

"The cells have concrete floors with a bed board that is locked up during the day", he explained.

Mr Shcharansky told his mother that last August he collapsed from lack of nourishment and spent 33 days in the prison hospital

YOUR ACTION IS NEEDED NOW !  
THIS MAN MAY DIE !  
Protest to:

USSR/ SSSR  
RSFSR  
422950 Tatarskaya ASSR  
g. Chistopol  
uchr. UE 148/st 4  
Director of Chistopol Prison  
Col. MALOFEYEV

We suggest you send this gentleman a telegramme or strong letter. Anatoly told his mother that her visit may have been the last one she will ever have to make as he felt he does not have much longer to live. The 20th January will be Anatoly's 34th birthday. Please make sure you send him a card and your best wishes. Please send your birthday greetings to the above address. PLEASE SEE THE END OF THIS CIRCULAR FOR DETAILS OF OUR BIRTHDAY DEMO.

**Support our Demo!**