



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 October 1982

Dear Mrs. Eker and Mrs. Rigal.

Thank you for your letters of 28 September and 1 October reporting the recent disturbing news about Anatoly Shcharansky.

I share your deep concern for his health. The treatment he is suffering in prison is appalling. It affronts basic human values and casts a dark shadow over international life. My colleagues and I have repeatedly made it plain to the Soviet Government that their treatment of Shcharansky and the many others who suffer for their beliefs, religious or political, in that country shows a stark disregard for their commitments under the Helsinki Final Act and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Foreign Office Ministers have recently raised Shcharansky's plight at meetings with the Soviet Ambassador, and only last week the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary took it up in New York with the Soviet Foreign Minister personally. We are thus doing our very best to bring home our concern in the most effective way possible.

The Russians can be in no doubt about our views and those of other Western Governments. We shall continue to work for an improvement in the Soviet human rights record and to subject the Soviet treatment of courageous individuals such as Shcharansky to the most demanding public scrutiny.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Thatcher

Mrs. Rita Eker and Mrs. Margaret Rigal.

Bre.

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

P.B.S.

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

RE/DC

(Please note new address)

13th October, 1982.

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

R. 15

N. S. P. R.

MR 15/6

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

Thank you so much for your letter of October 11th.

We realise it may appear that we continually harass you concerning our campaign for Soviet Jewry but we do appreciate the behind-the-scenes diplomacy that is used with the Soviet authorities in this field.

Both Margaret Rigal and myself are very aware of the personal attention you give to our particular Human Rights problems, which form a miniscule proportion of the hundreds of facets with which your Office must become involved.

Yours sincerely,

Rita Eker.

Soviet Union, June '79, Soviet Jewry

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY



Co-Chairman: Mrs. Sylvia G. Bass
Chairman: Mrs. Sylvia G. Bass
1000 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10020

Dear Madam,

The Rt. Hon. Laurence Hatcher,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

Dear Mr. Hatcher,

I realize it may appear that an ordinarily person for concerning our
campaign for Soviet Jewry but as of course the Government has
responsibility first to and then the Soviet authorities in this
matter. I am sure that you will be very aware of the personal attention
you have to not particular human rights problem, which you are a
proportion of the hundreds of facets with which your office must
be involved.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia G. Bass



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 October, 1982

Jan Tshu.

Type please.

ASL 5/10.

Anatoly Shcharansky

We spoke on the telephone today about the two letters the Prime Minister has received from the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry. I now enclose an amended draft reply from the Prime Minister to replace that enclosed with Christopher Greenwood's letter of 7 October.

You see.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

DSR 1 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO: Mrs Margaret Rigal and Mrs Rita Eke
Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry
564 Finchley Road
LONDON NW11

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your letters of 28 September and
1 October reporting the recent disturbing news about
Anatoly Shcharansky.

CAVEAT.....

I share your deep concern for his health. The
treatment he is suffering in prison is appalling. It
affronts basic human values and casts a dark shadow over
international life. My colleagues and I have repeatedly
made it plain to the Soviet ^{Government} ~~Union~~ that ^{is their} ~~their~~ treatment
of Shcharansky and the many others who suffer for their
beliefs, religious or political, in that country shows
a stark disregard for their commitments under the
Helsinki Final Act and the International Covenant on
Civil and Political Rights. ^{Foreign Office} ~~Most recently~~, FCO Ministers
^{recently} have raised Shcharansky's plight at meetings with the
Soviet Ambassador, and only last week the Foreign
and Commonwealth Secretary took it up in New York with
the Soviet Foreign Minister personally. We are thus
doing our very best to bring home our concern in the
most effective way possible.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

The Russians can be in no doubt about our ^{views and those of} ~~and~~ other

/Western

Western Governments. ~~views.~~ We continue to hope that our efforts may have an effect but, as you know, the atmosphere in the Soviet Union at the moment is only too depressingly bleak. ~~Nevertheless~~ ^W We shall continue to work for an improvement in the Soviet human rights record, and to subject the Soviet treatment of courageous individuals such as Shcharansky to the most demanding public scrutiny.

MR 5/12



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 October 1982

Overseen.

Dear Tim

*MG
/10*

Anatoly Shcharansky

You enclosed with your letter of 29 September one from Margaret Rigal and Rita Eker of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry (WCSJ) dated 28 September about Anatoly Shcharansky. A second letter from the WCSJ dated 1 October was enclosed with your letter of 5 October.
/ I enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister.

Yours

Cl's

(C P Greenwood)
Assistant Private Secretary

T Flesher Esq
10 Downing Street

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

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mrs Margaret Rigal and Mrs Rita Eker
 Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry
 564 Finchley Road
 LONDON NW11

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your letters of 28 September and 1 October reporting the most recent news on Anatoly Shcharansky.

CAVEAT.....

I share your concern for his health and continue to be appalled by the treatment he is suffering in prison. As you know, my colleagues and I take the closest interest in Anatoly Shcharansky's case and take every suitable opportunity to remind the Soviet authorities of the importance we attach to human rights. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs raised ^{Mr} Shcharansky's case with the Soviet Foreign Minister in New York at the end of September and reiterated our views on Soviet abuses of human rights with reference to the Helsinki Final Act. The Russians can be in no doubt about the British and other Western Governments' views. We continue to hope that our efforts may have an effect. In the meantime we hope that you will continue to keep in close touch with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on developments in Anatoly Shcharansky's case.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

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7 OCT 1982



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RM

8/10

Mrs. Rita EKER

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

5 October, 1982

ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from the Co-Chairmen of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry. The letter appeals for urgent action by the Prime Minister on behalf of the above.

I believe that Mrs Thatcher will want to reply quickly. I should be grateful if you could let me have a suitable draft by mid-day on 8 October.

ALL DOLES

R Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

RB



Rm

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

5 October, 1982

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 1 October. This is receiving attention and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

A. J. COLES

Mrs Rita Eker,

ojs

lps pl

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

35'S

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Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

MR/DC

(Please note new address)

1st October, 1982.

Dear Ms. Thatcher,

Avital Shcharansky telephoned from Israel in the early hours of the morning to give us the enclosed Statements.

She is beside herself with concern for Anatoly and also for his mother, Ida Milgrom. She asked that we should send these Statements to you and beg you to take action before it is too late. She is appealing for letters and telegrams to be sent to President Reagan at the White House and to the Head of the KGB, Vitaly Fedorchuk, urging them to take immediate action on behalf of Shcharansky. Fedorchuk's address is:-

USSR RSFSR
MOSCOW
ul. Dzerzhinskogo 2.

She, herself, is flying to Washington on Sunday evening to commence a vigil outside the Soviet Embassy in protest against her husband's treatment.

Soviet officials have already informed Ida Milgrom that they would force-feed Anatoly if he continued with his hungerstrike. From the appalling description of force-feeding by Iosif Mendelevich you will see that in his already weakened state Anatoly is unlikely to be able to withstand such brutal treatment.

We beg you to do whatever you can to save Anatoly's life.

Yours sincerely,

Rita Eker

Margaret Rigal

Rita Eker and Margaret Rigal,
Co-Chairmen,
Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry.

- Enclosed:
1. Statement by Josef Mendelevich on Hungerstriking in a Soviet prison.
 2. Appeal by former long-term Refuseniks.
 3. Appeal by former Prisoners of Zion.

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

For further information outside
office hours - Tel: (01) 458 6624

Below is the text of a telephone conversation from
Jerusalem to Rita Eker on the 28th September, 1982

STATEMENT BY JOSEF MENDELEVICH ON THE EVE OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT ON HUNGERSTRIKING IN A SOVIET PRISON.

A hungerstrike formally begins when a prisoner conveys his declaration of intention to strike to the prison authorities. The prison director calls in the prisoner and announces that the Soviet regime does not recognise such an act and, therefore, it is illegal. 'You are allowed not to eat as much as you want to eat, but we must carry out our obligations to give you food according to the regulations.' Despite the prisoner's refusal to eat, the guards bring food to his cell so that the sight of it will stimulate him. They deliberately keep the hungerstriker with other prisoners who are eating as usual, so that they can say: 'how can we tell if you are striking or not; we are serving food as usual; there are rations right next to you'. The prison authorities show total lack of concern to the issue for which the prisoner is striking. They seek only to persecute the prisoner to convince him to give up. The next step in the official dis-interest in the hungerstrike is the accusation that this is an anti-Soviet act, warranting criminal punishment. When the hungerstriker becomes so weak that he can't work, then he is accused of refusing to work. For this crime he can be incarcerated for fifteen days in solitary confinement, a concrete box with no bed, table or window, with only a hole in the floor for sewerage.

After this measure many hungerstrikers cannot withstand the psychological and physical pressure and give up. If the strike continues the prison doctor comes to visit the prisoner even though at this point any layman could immediately diagnose that the hungerstriker is on the verge of exhaustion. The doctor's task is not to help, but to exert additional psychological pressure and tell the hungerstriker of the harm he is doing to his internal organs. This explanation is repeated many times. At this stage the hungerstriker is isolated for an entire day in a solitary confinement cell and he is not allowed to see friends. KGB agents persist in coming to intimidate him.

Next comes the period of total neglect. The hungerstriker continues to breathe but the authorities consider him dead. According to the regulations and the biological situation artificial feeding must begin. The guards enter the cell, attack the prisoner, throw him to the floor, put him in handcuffs and a straight-jacket. They force open his mouth with a special instrument which affords the prisoner a few broken ribs and teeth. A tube of 8 mm diameter is put in his mouth with direct access to the stomach. One thousand calories worth of liquid food is poured through the tube. The prisoner tries to stem the flow by pressing the tube with his teeth. This causes painful headaches and stomach aches. As it is given between long breaks it forces the prisoner to start his hungerstrike over again many times.

STATEMENT BY JOSEF MENDELEVICH (continued)

This coerced on-off pattern is much more painful than continuous hungerstrike as the amount of food given at one force-feeding does not allow the body to function, so this form of nutrition is the most sophisticated form of torture. It is torture which perpetrates serious degeneration of the body.

It is only thanks to public support that the hungerstriker will withstand these hardships and win his objective.

We the public must help Anatoly SHCHARANSKY win his objective of life and freedom.

* * * * *

(Josef Mendeleovich fasted 57 days prior to his release)

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

For Further Information Outside Office Hours - Telephone (01) 458 6624

Below is the text of a telephone conversation from
Jerusalem to Rita Eker on the 28th September 1982

DECLARATION BY FORMER PRISONERS OF ZION ON THE EVE OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

We have just been informed that Anatoly SHCHARANSKY has started an unlimited hungerstrike, demanding an end to isolation from the outside world. For six years he has not been allowed to receive or send letters to his wife, has been denied the right to meet with relatives. The letters which he writes and have been written to him have been confiscated in direct contradiction to International Law.

We have no doubt that the Soviet Government has taken these measures in order to inflict pressure on our friend and to force Anatoly SHCHARANSKY to admit to the false accusations which caused him to be sentenced to thirteen years of imprisonment. The Soviet Government wants to break his spirit and kill him. Anatoly's life is of paramount importance to us because we love him as a close friend and as a human being. His fate represents that of millions of Soviet Jews threatened by national genocide.

At this moment when our dear friend is isolated in a sordid cell in the dreadful Chistopol prison, courageously fighting for his rights, for his life with his people, we former victims of the Soviet prison system, turn to you our Jewish brothers and people of goodwill throughout the world, in a cry for us to rise up as one soul and protest. We will not let the white-collared wardens of the Kremlin exterminate this precious human life. We will win his freedom!

(signed) Mark Dymshitz Josef Mendeleovich Anatoly Altman
Boris Penson Lev Roitburd Silva Zalmanson
Israel Wulf Natan Malkin Misha Mager
Yuri Goldfand Tina Brodeskaya Arieleh Knokh
Alexander Silnitsky Raiza Polatnik
Mikhail Kornblit Josef Mishinev Lazar Lubarsky
Hillel Butman Boris Tsitlionok Yakov Suslensky
Sender Levinson Alexander Feldman Pascall Kaminsky
Edward Kuznetsov Mark Lutzer Vladimir Mogorov

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

For further information outside office hours
telephone - (01) 458 6624.

Below is the text of a telephone conversation from
Jerusalem to Rita Eker on the 28th September, 1982.

APPEAL BY FORMER LONG-TERM REFUSENIKS ON THE EVE OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

This appeal is addressed to you by former Refuseniks and relatives of Soviet Jews who have been forcibly separated from their families in Israel.

This appeal is of an emergency nature in view of the dramatic developments in the situation of Anatoly SHCHARANSKY. We have just learnt that he has announced a hungerstrike to begin on Yom Kipur, the Day of Atonement. For many months he has been kept in an internal punishment cell which is so horrible that even by Soviet law a prisoner cannot be kept there for more than fifteen days. Anatoly's health has been ruined completely by hunger, cold and lack of fresh air. He is alone, completely isolated from his family and surrounded by secret police guards, but he continues to struggle despite the intolerable inhumane conditions in which he is kept by the Soviet authorities. He can only take this risky decision to start a hunger strike as the last step in his struggle for his ideals.

The life of a beloved friend, a great hero is in mortal danger. We urge you to mobilise world public opinion, to mobilise all those to whom freedom and justice are dear, we urge you to explain to the Soviet Government that they cannot crush Anatoly's life in this way. We ask you to react immediately before it is too late!

(signed) Josef Ahs	Yakov Ariev	Dina & Josef Beilin
Dr. Ginsburg	Shmuel Bronfman	Dr. Dan Rogensky
Dr. Luntz	Prof. Ben Fain	Ilana Friedman-Nudel
Dr. Sonyia Lerner-Lewin		Yevgeny Lenchik
Misha Mager	Inna Rubin	Emmanuel Brochils
Lev Ulanovsky	Alexander Voronel	

file

BDC

29 September 1982

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 28 September.

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

(TIMOTHY FLESHER)

Miss Margaret Rigal and Miss Rita Eker

BDC

File BR
13/10

Miss M. RIGEL

29 September 1982

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from Miss Margaret Rigal and Miss Rita Eker, Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry.

I should be grateful if you could let me have a draft Private Secretary reply to send, to reach me by Wednesday 13 October.

(TIMOTHY FLESHER)

Chris Greenwood, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

564 Finchley Road, London NW11
Tel: 01-458 7147

(Please note new address)

MR/RE

28th September, 1982.

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

629

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

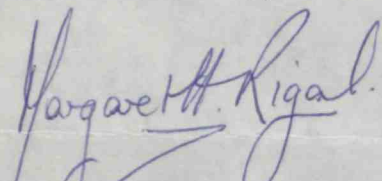
We have just learned from Avital that Tolya SHCHARANSKY started an unlimited fast yesterday, the Jewish Day of Atonement. He is protesting against the total isolation in which he is held and the refusal of the prison authorities to transmit his letters into or out of the prison.

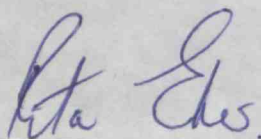
This information was given to Avital by Tolya's mother, Ida Milgrom on the telephone from Moscow. Ida learned of this new development when she spoke to an ex-prisoner who had been released from Chistopol shortly before. We have been asked not to publicise the source of Ida Milgrom's information.

Avital is convinced that her husband will not easily be broken by the Soviet regime, but she fears that his health will eventually give way and she is appealing to you and other Western leaders to intervene once more on Tolya's behalf. We understand that the State Department of the U.S.A. has already made public representation.

We do hope that you did not find your strenuous tour of the Far East too tiring and that you are satisfied with its outcome.

Yours sincerely,


Margaret Rigal



Rita Eker

on behalf of
Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry