

file

RH



c/o
Ingham

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

15 July 1983

Dear Mr. Reitman,

Thank you for your letter which you delivered through our Embassy in Moscow on 29 June. I think it is very important that ordinary people in every country should have the opportunity to voice their opinions on the vital issues of peace and war. Although I do not agree with everything you say in your letter, I welcome the fact that you have written to me. I endorse your aim of curbing nuclear arms and improving the prospects for continued peace between East and West. No one is a stronger advocate than I of maintaining peace with security.

As regards the specific questions you raise, I think you may be under some misapprehension as to what has been happening in Britain. No action has been taken against participants in peaceful protests against the Government's nuclear defence policy. Large numbers of people have demonstrated and made their views absolutely clear without any action being taken against them. Peaceful demonstrations are legal in Britain. However, some people have been arrested because they have broken the law by obstructing public roads. I have to tell you that it would be quite wrong, and indeed impossible, for the British Government to interfere with the normal process of justice in such cases. In this country, the courts are independent of the Government.

The debate on these issues is open and frank in our Parliament, in the newspapers and on television and through speeches and meetings all over the country. I have always welcomed this open debate.

/It

de

It has enabled us to put forward our views as clearly as we have heard the views of those who disagree with the current policy of Western Governments. The British people gave a decisive indication of their preference in our recent election.

I should like to hear of an equally open debate in the Warsaw Pact countries about these great issues. I fully understand that this would involve criticisms of some things in Britain such as those you have made, but debate which includes both criticism and the chance of reply to it can only assist the causes of peace and truth.

Y
ours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Mr. Reitman

file

CONFIDENTIAL



da
c Ingham

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 July 1983

Message to the Prime Minister from the Soviet
Unofficial Peace Movement

Thank you for your letter of 13 July.

The Prime Minister agrees that a reply to the message from the Soviet Unofficial Peace Movement should be delivered by our Embassy in Moscow. I enclose a letter signed by Mrs. Thatcher and should be grateful if you would take the necessary action.

We also agree that the press should be informed that the Prime Minister has sent a reply. We believe it would be right to give the press a full account of its contents.

A. J. COLES

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

SJ



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 July 1983

Prime Minister

If you agree with this, you
may like to sign the
attached letter.

RB 14.
7

Jan T. H.

Message to the Prime Minister from the Soviet Unofficial Peace
Movement

On 29 June, representatives of the Unofficial Soviet Peace Movement delivered to our Embassy in Moscow a message addressed to the Prime Minister of which I enclose the text, together with the Embassy's translation. The group had made two previous attempts to deliver the message, but had been detained by the KGB.

Although we would not normally advise the Prime Minister to reply to a message of this kind, the special circumstances of its delivery and the degree of personal risk taken by the Soviet citizens involved would appear to justify an exception. I therefore enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister.

If the Prime Minister agrees, we will arrange to have this letter delivered by our Embassy in Moscow. Bearing in mind that the delivery to the Embassy of the message was reported by the press and also the publicity given recently to messages from Mr Andropov to individuals in the west, we would propose that once the Embassy have confirmed delivery of the letter, the press should be informed that the Prime Minister has sent a reply and of the gist of its content.

Jan T. H.
Robert Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

13 JUL 1985

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10
11 12 13 14 15

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

MOSCOW GROUP FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUST BETWEEN USSR & USA

TO: THE RT HON MARGARET THATCHER MP

Respected Mrs Thatcher!

We, the members of the Moscow peace group "Doveriya" are deeply disturbed by the recent mass arrests of British peace supporters which we heard of in the Soviet press. Our group is certain that the curbing of the nuclear arms race and of disarmament can only be achieved under a climate of international trust between governments and between East and West. We consider that the peaceful activists of Great Britain are promoting the establishment of such a climate through their actions.

We know several peace supporters in your country personally and count them as friends, recently we received in Moscow Ann Petit, Carmen Cutler and others. You must agree, Mrs Thatcher, that when your friends are thrown in prison, even for just a few days, you cannot remain indifferent.

We know that there is not a national peace movement. There is one movement which has one aim: peace. Both the British movement and the peace movement in our country are parts of a whole. Therefore we do not consider the arrests to be an internal matter for Great Britain. We allow that the arrested peace activists may have committed some petty offences such as trespassing on state property. But it does not seem to us that the harm they caused was in proportion with the harm which they were trying to avert: the threat of global nuclear war.

The "Doveriya" Group intends in future to watch out carefully for any repression whose victims are peace supporters in any country of the West or the East.

МОСКОВСКАЯ ГРУППА ЗА УСТАНОВЛЕНИЕ ДОВЕРИЯ
МЕЖДУ СССР И США

Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher M.P.
~~ЕЕ ПРЕВОСХОДИТЕЛЬНОМУ ПРЕМЬЕР-МИНИСТРУ~~

МАРГАРЕТ ТЭТЧЕР

ДАУНИНГ СТРИТ, 10

ЛОНДОН, ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИЯ

Многоуважаемая госпожа Тэтчер:

Мы — члены московской мирной группы "Доверие" — глубоко озабочены недавними массовыми арестами британских сторонников мира, о которых мы узнали из советской прессы. Наша группа уверена в том, что добиться прекращения гонки ядерных вооружений и последующего разоружения можно только при условии создания климата международного доверия между как правительствами, так и общественностью Востока и Запада. И мы считаем, что мирные активисты Великобритании своими действиями способствуют установлению такого доверия.

Некоторых сторонников мира в вашей стране мы знаем лично и можем назвать своими друзьями — недавно мы принимали в Москве Эни Петит, Кармен Катлер и других. Согласитесь, госпожа Тэтчер, что, когда ваших друзей бросают в тюрьмы — пусть даже на несколько дней — к этому нельзя остаться равнодушным.

Мы уже поняли, что не существует национальных движений за мир. Есть одно движение, у которого одна цель — Мир. И британское движение, и движение за мир в нашей стране — части одного целого. Поэтому мы не считаем аресты внутренним делом Великобритании.

Мы допускаем мысль о том, что арестованные мирные активисты могли совершить некоторые мелкие правонарушения, как например, вторгнуться в частное или государственное владение. Но нам кажется, что то зло, которое они при этом причинили, нельзя даже сравнить по своим масштабам с тем злом, которое они пытались предотвратить — угрозой глобальной термоядерной войны.

Группа "Доверие" намерена и в будущем пристально следить за репрессиями, жертвами которых становятся сторонники мира в любой стране Запада или Востока.

Москва 14 июня 1983