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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

17 October 1983

Reverend Michael Bourdeaux

You will remember that the above attended the Prime Minister's meeting with academics at Chequers in September when the question of East/West relations was discussed.

I enclose a copy of a letter which I have now received from him in which he asks whether the Prime Minister is willing to take up individual cases of repression in the Soviet Union. He refers in particular to the case of Valeri Barinov and encloses some details.

I should be grateful for advice and a draft reply.

A. J. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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# Keston College

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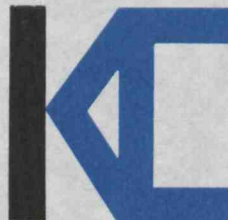
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14 October 1983

A.J. Coles, Esq.  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1



Dear Mr Coles,

Following our very useful and interesting session at Chequers on 8 September, I am writing to ask whether, in your opinion, the Prime Minister is at present willing to take up individual cases of repression in the Soviet Union. There is, of course, no doubt about her deep concern and she reassured me of this during our conversation at lunch time on that day. She particularly mentioned her meeting with Avital Shcharansky and Georgi Vins.

We, of course, all realise that in the present mood their response will be predictable, at least in the short term. However, we have just come across one case which stands out among a number of other distressing ones which are crossing our desk in rapid succession. This concerns Valeri Barinov, a 39-year old Christian evangelist and rock musician who was arrested on 11 October and has been interned in a Leningrad psychiatric hospital. I enclose some details about this case.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Michael Bourdeaux (Director)

14th October 1983

VALERI ALEXANDROVICH BARINOV: FACT SHEET

Born 1944, married with two daughters, aged 13 and 11.

Converted to Christianity in his twenties after he had become a 'drop-out'. He always worked as a driver - up until 1978 he drove an ambulance. Since 1978 he has not been able to find regular work because of his evangelistic activities. A self-taught musician he has always sung and played 'pop' music at secular functions, but has always included a testimony about his Christian convictions. Formed various groups during the 70s with young musicians from his local area and started to use music as a means to do evangelistic work among young people, particularly drug addicts and alcoholics. Composed a Christian rock opera entitled 'The Trumpet Call' and taught himself English so that he could have it translated into English. Formed a group of seven professional Christian musicians and succeeded in recording the opera in English and Russian in 1982. Appealed to Soviet authorities in December 1982 for permission to give public performances of the rock opera. Interrogated intensively in the first three months of 1983 and has been under constant surveillance. Called up to do reservist training in February and subjected to psychiatric examination. Registered as a psychiatric patient in April and told he would not be required to do reservist training. Numerous friends testify to his sanity. Dismissed from his job in May and unable to find work since. Expelled from the Leningrad Baptist Church in June (the Baptist leaders were obviously instructed to do this by the KGB). Arrested on 11 October and interned in a Leningrad psychiatric hospital. Over the last year he has written a large number of appeals and letters documenting what has happened to him, one of which (to President Regan) is attached.

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To the President of the United States of America, through you to all the people of America and all honourable people of the world.

OPEN LETTER

We, the members of the Christian musical group, The Trumpet Call, which was established in Leningrad, in the Soviet Union according to the will of Almighty God, turn to you for help. Despite the difficult circumstances which exist where godlessness prevails, the Lord helped us to write our first musical programme in two languages - in our native Russian and in English. This was necessary because our genuine desire is to witness to everyone about our coming Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We want to work for our people and with this sincere aim we sent a letter in January 1983 to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in which we requested permission to work freely and creatively for the good of our people. This appeal was broadcast twice on Western radio (in February and March this year), but to our great disappointment we have still received no reply. On the contrary, the local authorities have made it clear to us that our religious programme is totally inadmissible for our people. But we do not see how <sup>we</sup> can ignore our work, the aim of which is to show people the sacrifice Christ made for us and to make people more honest and useful in society.

In this letter we want to give certain facts which we consider to be evidence of blatant persecution by the authorities. On 17 January the KGB confiscated the appeals addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet at the post office. On 24 January we typed up the appeals a second time and decided to travel to Moscow in order to send our letters from there, but we were detained by the militia at the Moscow station in Leningrad and they forbade us to travel to Moscow and confiscated the appeals and three cassette tape recordings of our Christian musical. All this was done so that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet would know nothing about our group or about our request to give public performances. However, we did eventually succeed in sending our appeals to Moscow by other means. On 28 January I was summoned by the local official from the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) in Leningrad, Nikolai Nikolaevich Kirov. He said, quoting the constitution of the USSR, that the authorities would not give permission for the group to perform publicly.

He added that communists should be waging an ideological war against religion. A KGB officer who was present during the conversation said, "I like your music, but if you want us to help you, don't sing about God".

In February we had another meeting with the CRA official and this took place in the presence of a man in civilian clothes (who had detained us at the Moscow station). The aim of this interview was to intimidate us. We were told that we would be proclaimed dissidents and taken from Leningrad beyond the Ural mountains.

On 27 January a lieutenant in uniform came to my flat, a district militiaman, and he told me that I had to go, as a matter of urgency, to the military commission, although I had received no notification about this. When I went to the military commission of the Vyborg district I was told that they intended to call me up to do two months military service and told me to go for a medical examination. The KGB used this cunning device to hand me over to a psychiatrist and nerve specialist and they, in their turn, directed me to the psycho-neurological clinic (PND). The reason they gave was that I was dangerous from the ideological point of view, in other words, as a preacher, and therefore unsuitable for military service.

Some time later the district militiaman came to my flat for a second time. He threatened to take me for compulsory examination if I did not appear on the following day, in the morning, at the PND. Convinced of my perfect state of health I decided that there was no necessity to subject myself to a compulsory psychiatric examination.

On April 13 I learned from the nurse, Yudina, who visited me from the PND in the Vyborg district attached to the Skvortsov-Stepanov psychiatric hospital that I had been placed on the register of psychiatric patients without my knowledge. What is astonishing about this whole farce organized by representatives of the local authorities is that people working in a humanitarian profession agreed to take part - people who are bound by the Hippocratic oath such as the doctors Maslova and Podsuk.

When my wife went to see doctor Podsuk in order to find out why they had put me on the register she deviated from the question and tried to remain silent. When my wife insisted that she wanted to know the diagnosis, she replied that she did not have the right to give the information because the diagnosis was a professional secret. The other doctor, Maslova, avoided speaking about this subject to my wife in the same way.

During February, the occupants of building number 24, block number 3 on Nevny Prospekt, witnessed the way in which the KGB were keeping me under surveillance. They noticed that a car was permanently stationed near the dustbins, next to the metal garages and that these cars were constantly changed and, as a rule, there were several people in them. When I informed a few of the occupants of this block about this, the cars disappeared. We therefore decided to carry out a little experiment. They watched and I went out of the entrance from their block and walked up to the car. When I was only a few meters away from it, the car and all the people inside it drove off immediately. During an interval of 20 minutes I approached the car five times, and each time the cars were changed. When the KGB agents realised that they were the object of an experiment, they disappeared.

On 4 March a cassette of our Christian musical was confiscated from my friend, Georgy Korshunov, whom I have known since childhood. I had given him the cassette myself. The confiscation was carried out by a special department of the KGB housed in Building No. 42, Dzerzhinskaya ul. Employees dressed in civilian clothes, informed him that the musical programme by the group, The Trumpet Call was Christian and therefore anti-Soviet and for this reason it had been confiscated.

On 28 April the telephone was cut off at the home of my sister, Valentina Barinova. This was because people had telephoned from England who were interested in our rock group and the circumstances in which we found ourselves because of the action taken by the KGB. At the telephone administration in Leningrad, Mr Zimchenko told us that the telephone had been cut off on special instructions for six months or possibly longer. He added that payment still had to be made for the six month period. He also said that it would be pointless to protest or to lodge a complaint. Incidentally, the phone had been paid for in full until September.

We could give many more examples, but the most important thing for us is that the leaders of our country have, until now, failed to respond to our request. At the same time, thanks to some Western radio broadcasts about our group and the stir which has been caused as a result of the unlawful activities carried out by the KGB to intimidate us, Sergei and I have received many letters from different parts of the country which express support for our sincere aims and condemnation of the unlawful activities carried out by the authorities. On the basis of these letters it is evident that people, and especially young people, are beginning to wake up from a spiritual slumber which has been brought about by atheism. People are beginning to understand that a desolate soul cannot be satisfied with alcohol, drugs, or even with wealth. And in these letters, it is as if the cry of the

spirit of our people is expressed - we want to know about God; we need God; we are tired of atheist brochures which are lying about on the counters of our book shops; we want the Holy Book, the Bible, which even the majority of believers have never seen.

With regard to the facts mentioned here we turn to you, Mr President, - help us in our difficult Christian work. We are threatened with further provocations from the authorities, we beg you to raise your voice to world public opinion in defence of our Christian rock group, The Trumpet Call and also to defend our families. We want you to know that the tapes with our musical programme have been sent to London, to Keston College, and records will soon be produced. In view of the fact that we are not able to address ourselves in writing to the Krenlin we want you to ask our government some questions in the name of our Christian group, The Trumpet Call.

Why are prisons and psychiatric hospitals used against those who stand up for the truth?

What is the point of putting obstacles in the way of all that is pure and holy? For what reason have the KGB stated that our purely Christian programme is anti-Soviet?

Would we really turn for help to international public opinion if there was true freedom of religion in our country?

Why is the post of an official in the Council for Religious Affairs held by an atheist and not by a Christian?

Is it possible that you, in the Krenlin, do not see how our people are shattered by godlessness? The reigning ideology of atheism in our country has given rise to drunkenness, drug addiction and especially theft and has produced a great number of traitors. As a result of the shortages of food, the continual rise in prices and low wages, people have lost faith in a bright future. More than 20 thousand families are mourning the loss of their sons who have been killed in Afgahnstan, and for what? And we, disciples of Jesus Christ, eager to work for the good of our people, ask you - is this not the result of the fact that our country has rejected its Creator, Holy God? As a result of this we are now reaping bitter fruit and are sliding down the slope of godlessness and heading for a terrible crash. Or, having rejecting the Almighty, does your hope lie in your powers of intellect and military might and do you want to spread this godlessness throughout the whole world? In the name of the Almighty in whom we trust, we beg you, Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov and our government, for the sake of the prosperity of our country - turn to God. And we appeal to you once again to give us permission to perform our Christian programme.

Mr Reagan, in concluding this letter, we ask you to make it widely known, so that people in America and other countries can know the true situation of believers in the Soviet Union. With respect - members of the Christian rock group, The Trumpet Call.  
Valeri Barinov: Leningrad, Pr. Khudozhnikov, d. 9, k. 2, kv. 74  
Sergei Timokhin: Leningrad, Pr. Entuziastov, d. 30, k. 2, kv. 268

3 June 1983