



FROM  
NICHOLAS  
BETHELL

TELEPHONE  
01-402-6877

73 SUSSEX SQUARE  
LONDON W2 2SS

The Rt. Hon. Leon Brittan, QC, MP,  
Home Office,  
Queen Anne's Gate,  
LONDON S.W.1.

30th March 1984

Dear Leon,

You may have seen the letter that the Prime Minister sent me on March 27th about Mr Igor Rykov and Mr Oleg Khlan, who are at present held by Afghan resistance fighters in Pakistan and wish to come to the United Kingdom.

I am very pleased that the PM has indicated the Government's willingness to look sympathetically at their applications. However, I must confess that I am rather bewildered by what her letter says about sponsorship.

The cost of bringing these two young men to Britain and integrating them into British life, accommodating them, feeding them and teaching them English until they are in a fit state to support themselves, will be quite considerable. I would imagine that it will be well over £10,000.

I appreciate that sponsorship can often be arranged for nationals of an existing community in this country. For instance, Jewish victims of Hitler's oppression were rescued from Europe under the sponsorship of Jewish communities.

Unfortunately, though, the Russian community in this country is very small and disorganised. It is politically split, so that by no means all Russians here wish to come to the aid of Soviet citizens. Furthermore, Mr Khlan, although a Soviet citizen, is not a Russian. He is an Uzbek.

I therefore feel in some difficulty over personally making the arrangements envisaged in the third paragraph of the Prime Minister's letter. I would be willing to help by trying to raise funds, but this is made more difficult by the Prime Minister's advice that the matter ought to be kept confidential until a final decision is reached.

I understand meanwhile that certain other western countries have agreed to share the burden of this problem with us, that other Soviet soldiers are on their way to western Europe or have arrived here. The scale of

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the problem is not large. It appears that only a few dozen men are involved. However, they will certainly be taken back into Afghanistan and killed if something is not done soon.

Since it was I who originally raised this matter with the Government, I appreciate that I must do my best to help with the administrative details. I do nevertheless feel that I can hardly make a start without some advice from your Department on how to go about arranging the sponsorship that the Government sees as a prerequisite to any further action.

I hope therefore that you will be able to indicate to me how one might proceed. I realise that this is a complicated matter and I am very grateful for the Government's sympathetic approach to it. I hope that it will not prove too difficult to work out the details.

*Yours ever*

*Richard Cross*

Lord Bethell





A.S.C.  $\frac{2}{4}$

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FROM  
NICHOLAS  
BETHELL

TELEPHONE  
01-402-6877

73 SUSSEX SQUARE  
LONDON W2 2SS

John Coles Esq.,  
10 Downing Street,  
LONDON S.W.1.

30th March 1984

Dear John,

I want to thank you very much indeed for the efforts that you went to over the complicated matter of "my" two Soviet soldiers.

I know that you did your best to push this matter through as quickly as possible and I am very grateful to you.

I enclose, just for your information, a copy of the letter that I have sent Leon Brittan about this problem. I very much hope that something can be arranged soon.

Yours ever,

Nicholas

Lord Bethell