



50 (27)

a MATTER SET

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 July, 1985

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MRS AVITAL SHCHARANSKY

The Prime Minister saw Mrs. Shcharansky briefly this afternoon. Mrs. Shcharansky was accompanied by Mrs Eker of the Womens Campaign for Soviet Jewry and two others.

Mrs. Shcharansky urged the Prime Minister to join with other Western leaders in exerting maximum pressure on the Soviet Government in the run-up to the Helsinki 10th Anniversary Meeting and the United States/Soviet Summit to obtain the release of her husband. Mrs. Eker added that the Prime Minister's statement that she could do business with Gorbachev had caused some alarm among refuseniks, as suggesting a readiness to overlook their plight. It was important to keep up maximum pressure on the Soviet government. The evidence was that conditions for would-be emigre's had become stricter under Gorbachev.

The Prime Minister said that we always had Anatoly's case very much in the forefront of our minds. But it would be wrong for her to give Mrs. Shcharansky the impression that we saw grounds for hope for his early release. She also urged Mrs. Shcharansky to consider the possibility that too much publicity for her husband's case might actually damage him because the Soviet authorities would find it more difficult to back down. Mrs. Shcharansky said that her husband had become a symbol for the hopes of all those held in the Soviet Union. She believed that sufficient pressure would embarrass the Soviets and cause them to relent. The Prime Minister said that she would continue to do all she could through discreet action to obtain Anatoly's release though we could not focus on his case alone.

(C.D. Powell)

C. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

VC