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ATTN HELEN RAWLINS, SOVIET UNION HUMAN RIGHTS DESK

KESTON COLLEGE/1 APRIL 1987

"MOSCOW CHRISTIANS APPEAL TO MARGARET THATCHER"

AN UNOFFICIAL CHRISTIAN ECUMENICAL GROUP IN THE SOVIET UNION HAS APPEALED TO MARGARET THATCHER TO INTERCEDE WITH THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES ON BEHALF OF TWO CATHOLIC PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE. HAVING NO MEANS OF APPROACHING MRS THATCHER PERSONALLY, THEY HAVE DICTATED THEIR APPEAL OVER THE TELEPHONE TO A FRIEND IN THE WEST.

"TO MRS MARGARET THATCHER, PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN.

ON 8 FEBRUARY 1984, CHRISTIAN ECUMENIST ALEXANDER RIGA WAS ARRESTED IN HIS MOSCOW FLAT. HE WAS CHARGED UNDER THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES OF THE CRIMINAL CODE OF THE RSFSR: 190-3 (ORGANISATION OF, OR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN, GROUP ACTION WHICH DISRUPTS PUBLIC ORDER) 227 (INFRINGEMENT OF THE PERSON AND RIGHTS OF CITIZENS UNDER THE GUISE OF PERFORMING RELIGIOUS RITUALS) AND ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA. AFTER THREE PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATIONS RIGA WAS DIAGNOSED AS SUFFERING FROM 'SLUGGISH' ('VYALOTEKUSHCHAYA') OR LATENT SCHIZOPHRENIA, A DIAGNOSIS WHICH WAS SIGNED BY THE CHIEF DOCTOR OF THE KASCHENKO PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, MORKOVKIN.

UNTIL NOVEMBER 1985 RIGA WAS HELD IN THE BUTYRSKAYA PRISON IN MOSCOW AND THEN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VERDICT PASSED BY THE COURT, FORCIBLY INCARCERATED IN THE BLAGOVESHCHENSK SPECIAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, WHERE HE HAS REMAINED FROM JANUARY 1986 UNTIL MARCH 1987. ALL THIS TIME, RIGA'S LIFE AND HEALTH HAS BEEN UNDER VERY REAL THREAT, FOR HE SUFFERS FROM CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE, AND THE DRUGS BEING FORCED ON HIM HAVE ALREADY BROUGHT HIM CLOSE TO DEATH ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

HE HAS JUST BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE REPUBLICAN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL IN THE LATVIAN CAPITAL, RIGA, FOR FURTHER ENFORCED PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT.

ALEXANDER RIGA'S FRIENDS AND FELLOW-BELIEVERS APPEAL TO YOU TO INTERCEDE FOR HIS IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

ALEXANDER RIGA WAS NOT THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE CHRISTIAN-ECUMENISTS' GROUP TO SUFFER REPRESSION. ON 19 SEPTEMBER 1983, SOFIA BELYAK WAS ARRESTED IN THE TOWN OF ZHITOMIR ON CHARGES OF BEING A MEMBER OF THE GROUP, AND OF TAKING PART IN PRODUCTION OF THE GROUP'S SAMIZDAT JOURNAL 'PRIZYV' (THE CALLING). SHE WAS TRIED UNDER ARTICLES 190-3 AND 227 (SEE ABOVE) AND SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS' DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY TO BE FOLLOWED BY FIVE YEARS' INTERNAL EXILE. TO THIS DAY SHE IS DOING FORCED LABOUR ON AGRICULTURAL SITES AT DNEPRODZERZHINSK IN THE DNEPROPETROVSK REGION.

50-YEAR OLD CATHOLIC PRIEST FR IOSIF SWIDNICKI IS ALSO IMPRISONED FOR HIS ACTIVE MISSIONARY WORK AND CONNECTION WITH THE CHRISTIAN-ECUMENISTS' GROUP. HE WAS TRIED IN 1985 ON CHARGES OF ANTI-SOVIET SLANDER (ART. 190-1 OF THE CRIMINAL CODE OF THE RSFSR) AND SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS' DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY.

IT IS OUR SINCERE HOPE THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP THESE PEOPLE.

IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WE APPEAL FOR YOUR INTERCESSION ON BEHALF OF PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS.

THE CHRISTIAN-ECUMENISTS' GROUP
MOSCOW, 30 MARCH 1987."

THE FOLLOWING IS ADDED TO THIS APPEAL:

"WE WISH TO ADD OUR SUPPORT TO THE APPEAL OF THE CHRISTIAN ECUMENICAL GROUP:

SERGEI GRIGORYANTS, RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
ALEXANDER OGORODNIKOV, RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
MIKHAIL KOPOT, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN
PYOTR GRIGALCHIK, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN
L. POLUNINA, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN
V. CHERTOVSKOY, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN."

NOTE TO EDITORS: GRIGORYANTS, OGORODNIKOV AND CHERTOVSKOY ARE AMONG THE RECENTLY RELEASED POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE USSR.

FURTHER RELEASES IN USSR:

IN ADDITION TO THE NEWLY REPORTED RELEASES OF LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC PRIEST FR SIGITAS TAMKEVICIUS, ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MIKHAIL BOMBIN, UNREGISTERED BAPTIST VLADIMIR KHAILO (RELEASED FROM PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL) AND FELLOW UNREGISTERED BAPTIST ANDREI WOLF, INCLUDED IN KESTON COLLEGE'S LIST OF YESTERDAY (31 MARCH), THE FOLLOWING RELEASES OF UNREGISTERED BAPTISTS ARE TO BE ADDED:

ULYANA GERMANYUK, WHO IS DANGEROUSLY ILL
YEGOR WOLF, TRIED WITH HIS BROTHER ANDREI
IVAN STEFFEN, TRIED WITH THE WOLF BROTHERS
PAVEL ZINCHENKO

NEWS HAS ALSO REACHED KESTON COLLEGE OF THE TRANSFER OF RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LEONID BORODIN FROM CAMP IN PERM TO MOSCOW'S LEFORTOVO PRISON IN MARCH. HIS FRIENDS ARE HOPING THIS IS A SIGN THAT HE WILL BE RELEASED.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 April 1987

Dear Andy

COP
MCA
Does this require any action?
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I have been asked to forward to you the attached telex which was sent to our Soviet Department by Keston College.

The telex contains a message to the Prime Minister from The Christian-Ecumenists' Group in Moscow.

Yours Sincerely
Russell Dixon
(R K Dixon)
Assistant Private Secretary

P A Bearpark Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

Post Office and Comptroller's Office

London, Ontario

