

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH DR KORYAGIN

You are to see Dr Koryagin on Wednesday afternoon. You will recall he is the Soviet psychiatrist who played the leading part in exposing the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, and was consequently sentenced to seven years in a labour camp. His son was also imprisoned. They were both released earlier this year and emigrated to Switzerland. Dr Koryagin will be accompanied by Mr David Atkinson MP, who is looking after him during his visit to the United Kingdom.

I think you will find Dr Koryagin has prepared a statement of his main concerns, so you will probably want to invite him to let you have his views on conditions in the Soviet Union and the prospects for change and reform, particularly in the light of Mr Gorbachev's speech today. I understand you will find him rather more pessimistic about the prospects than, say, Dr Sakharov or Mr Orlov. He may express particular concern about the possibility of a Human Rights Conference in Moscow. You will want to reassure him that you are not in any way committed to this idea.

C D P

C D POWELL

2 November 1987

DASACO



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CC BTUP

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 November 1987

Dear Charles,

Call by Dr Koryagin on the Prime Minister:
4 November 1987

I enclose briefing for this call in the form of points to make and a background note, covering two recent press articles reflecting Dr Koryagin's thinking on human rights questions and the prospects for change in the Soviet Union. As you will see, he is generally pessimistic on these issues and in discussion is likely to take a harder line on the Gorbachev reforms than, say, Dr Sakharov or Yuri Orlov. If the Prime Minister is interested in more background on Mr Koryagin, the department also have a short book about him and his struggle, published earlier this year.

Dr Koryagin will be calling on FCO officials on the morning of 4 November to give his general impressions of the Soviet human rights situation. While in the UK, he appears to be under the wing of the "Association for a Free Russia". David Atkinson MP is one of the patrons of this organisation. Dr Koryagin is being accompanied to the FCO by both Mr Atkinson and Mr George Miller, editor of the Association's 'Political Information Letter', who will act as interpreter.

Mr Miller, who is of Russian emigre extraction, and his father are closely connected with the Soviet emigre organisation known as NTS (Alliance of Russian Solidarists). This Frankfurt-based organisation has a long and dubious track record and is almost certainly heavily penetrated by the KGB. Ministers have long treated it with extreme caution. We therefore spoke about the desirability of keeping Mr Miller out of the meeting with the Prime Minister (the fact that Mr Bishop will be there to interpret should be a useful explanation for this). Further background on the NTS is readily available should you want to see it.

Yours ever, *L Parker*

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY DR ANATOLY KORYAGIN:

4 NOVEMBER 1987

Points to Make

- Welcome opportunity to meet. Admire your long struggle to expose abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union.
- Despite releases this year, understand not many allowed out of mental hospitals. Your view of present position?
- Abhor abuse of psychiatry for political purposes. Raised general issue of prisoners of conscience with Mr Gorbachev in March.
- Will maintain pressure on Soviet authorities to improve human rights record. Releases welcome. But do not intend to lose sight of aim of across-the-board change in Soviet attitude to basic human freedoms.

Moscow Conference

- No question of agreement to Moscow Conference without substantial and firm commitments from Soviet authorities on human rights and contacts policies.
- Premature therefore to give serious consideration to this idea.
- In your view, can West secure meaningful Soviet concessions for any agreement to Moscow Conference?

Gorbachev's Reforms

- Told Mr Gorbachev we welcomed his policies of openness, restructuring and democratisation. Hope these will lead to more freedom in Soviet Union.

- Mr Gorbachev deserves benefit of doubt for the present. No question changes are taking place. But major task to implement ambitious reform programme. Too early to say whether Soviet economy and society can be transformed.

- In any case must recognise Soviet Communist system can never accommodate democracy as we know it. So must remain vigilant, defend our security and other interests vigorously.

- Any grounds for optimism about prospects for reform in your view?

BACKGROUND

Dr Koryagin, a Soviet psychiatrist, has played a leading role in exposing the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. He produced a paper on the practice which was widely publicised in the West, including in "The Lancet" in 1981. Following his revelations, the Soviet Union eventually withdrew from the World Psychiatric Association (in 1983) in response to calls for their expulsion. In 1981, Koryagin was arrested, charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" and sentenced to 7 years in a labour camp and 5 years in internal exile. He undertook hunger strikes in 1982, 1984 and 1985, when a further 2 years in camp was added to his sentence for "resisting authority".

Dr Koryagin's case aroused great concern in the West. His name figures frequently on lists of cases of Soviet abuses of human rights. Along with a number of other political prisoners, he was finally released in February this year. His son Ivan, who had also been imprisoned, was released in March. The family were allowed to emigrate to Switzerland in April.

interview with Nicholas Bethell, freed Soviet dissident Anatoly Koryagin under
emitting pressure on Moscow for the release of all imprisoned for their belie

Beware the glasnost trap

He is perhaps the toughest Soviet dissident of them all. He was the doctor who diagnosed as sane those people the KGB wanted to consign to mental hospitals. And, in reports smuggled out of the Soviet Union, he told the world.

Dr Anatoly Koryagin, with a promising medical career in front of him, could have chosen the good life with his wife and his three sons. Instead he took on the Soviet establishment, keeping "anti-socialists" out of closed wards where they would have been fed with drugs. As a result, he was arrested in 1981 but at the weekend flew to Lucerne, where he is now recovering from a six-year ordeal.

He is now living in a house above Lake Lucerne. When we met on Sunday he told me how the KGB had kept him, as it has many others, in conditions of cold and starvation so that he could not sleep for more than a few minutes at a time. He developed illnesses for which he was never properly treated, losing nearly half his body weight, and then force-fed through the nose, all the time being threatened with extra years in jail for resisting authority.

Three months ago Mikhail Gorbachov announced an amnesty for 140 but Koryagin believes that only about 100 of the 250 people convicted of anti-Soviet activity have so far been released. In addition there are between 2,000 and 3,000 people imprisoned on religious or other non-political charges. And the confinement of sane people in mental hospitals continues.

But the situation has altered. Koryagin says: "The KGB changed the formula. Nowadays, instead of admitting that we have been guilty in the past, we are asked to promise to behave in the future. This makes it easier for people to sign - but just as dangerous. At the same time they throw more and more into isolation cells, starving and freezing us. Each one of us in solitary confinement knew that he only had to ask the guard in the corridor and a KGB man would come running offering to review the case in return for a signature. Of course, some people signed. I don't blame them. A man can only take so much.

"I decided to leave because I do not for the moment see any sign of the sort of changes that would allow me to carry on my work and express my ideas. I propose to do that in a Western country instead. There are also personal reasons. I have been pardoned, but in their eyes I am still a criminal. It says so



Koryagin on arrival in Switzerland with 19-year-old Ivan, the son who suffered for refusing to denounce him

in the paper I refused to sign. I could easily be arrested again, in which case I would survive as I did before, but what about my family?

"It upsets me that people in the West believe that there is no longer much of a problem over Soviet political prisoners. A few people have been released, but only enough, in the eyes of outsiders, to create a feeling of change and to damp down pressure for further reform. Unless that pressure is revived, my friends still in the camps will be made to pay the price.

"Personally I do not think that the Gorbachov programme is likely to produce any far-reaching result. The 'reforms' are directed from above, which means they can at any time be reversed. We saw it all before during the Khrushchev period. He released millions from the camps, even rehabilitated them, and people then thought there would be true democracy. But in 1964 he was removed. Dissidents were being arrested again while he was still in power.

"A true programme of change would not be directed from above. It would simply give people certain rights, for instance to create political groups and discuss problems openly, or to leave the country and return to it. Then there might be some real hope. As things are, though, *glasnost* is no more than permitted criticism, not coming from the people but

PTD
not many know
the best known
Brodsky

“They let me go because the West was pestering them about me. Those who are less well known are being kept inside”

cutting dated.....

all. "He would come home from school in tears. The children, encouraged by their teachers, kept calling his father a traitor and a fascist. The idea was to make his life at school impossible." The crunch came when Ivan, then 14, was called to the front at a school assembly and told to speak out against his father's behaviour. He refused, tearing off his Pioneer scarf, and was expelled. Two years later he was involved in a street brawl. As a result he was sentenced to three year's imprisonment for hooliganism and was released only a few weeks ago in time to travel to Switzerland with the others.

On February 9 this year, a KGB man told Dr Koryagin that he would be released if he signed a document promising to refrain from anti-Soviet activity. It was a tempting prospect, but Koryagin replied that he would promise only to resume his human rights activity on the day after his release and would never sign a paper that could be interpreted as an admission of guilt.

"In spite of this they released me, but it was only because of intense pressure from Western doctors and politicians. They let me go because the West was pestering them about me. Those who are less well known are being kept inside."

Mikhail Kukobaka and Grigory Kutsenko, he says, are two of those who have been returned to the Perm labour camp after refusing to sign undertakings as a condition of release. "This is very important to the KGB. They must maintain the idea that these are criminals who have been pardoned, as opposed to human rights activists who should never have been in prison in the first place. It was all carefully planned. I remember the intense KGB activity in the camps a year ago. They knew the amnesty was coming and they wanted to preserve their position by getting as many of us as possible to sign their rotten declarations."

Dr Koryagin does not therefore share Andrei Sakharov's view that the country can best be helped by staying at home and encouraging the process of reform. After all he has suffered, it would perhaps be strange if he did. He is optimistic, but only in terms of the distant future. "A great nation like Russia will not continue on this degrading path for ever. One day we will be a democratic country, but I do not know when and I very much doubt if it will be as a logical consequence of what Mr Gorbachov is doing."

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directed from above and designed merely to remove those defects that interrupt the building of socialism.

"You in the West seem to see *glasnost* as a continuing process of democratization, but I cannot see it that way. I agree that if the Gorbachov programme continues to develop without interruption, there will eventually be fundamental change. But what is there to suggest this will happen? Elections within the party will affect only a small minority."

Now that he is free and able to talk to whom he likes, Dr Koryagin hopes to resume work as a psychiatrist and try to come to terms with the last six years of his life, when his wife and three sons were also made to pay for his defiance.

Galina Koryagina says: "During those years every member of our family was beaten up in the streets of Kharkov, our home town, some of us several times. My sons were attacked. So was my mother, and so was I. Once, in 1982, after Alexander was severely concussed, at the age of nine, I took the matter to court. The judge ruled that it was quite 'natural' for public opinion to express itself against an anti-Soviet family like ours."

Dr Koryagin's eldest son Ivan, now 19, was tormented worst of

CSI: Do such religious groups exist already, campaigning for people in psychiatric imprisonment?

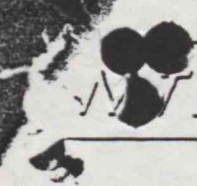
Anatoli Koryagin: Personally I know of none. But it is my opinion that such groups will soon come into being. With all the talk at the moment of restructuring, there is no doubt that people will begin to recognise the greater possibilities for more open activity under these new conditions. Western organisations should now begin a defence campaign for all dissidents interned in psychiatric hospitals and then devote their particular attention to religious prisoners. Their activities must be intensified: the time has come when Western efforts bring results, as the Soviet authorities must take protests from the West seriously. An example; on Monday (27 April) the Catholic TENGIZ GUDAVA was released in Tbilisi. This is a good piece of news. He is a friend of mine, and I am very happy about this. His brother, also a Catholic, is still in custody. There is a possibility that he too will soon be freed (he was freed on 30 April - Ed.). Tengiz was only freed because people who love freedom (among them religious groups) had campaigned strongly for him. That campaigning was necessary. It is my belief that above all religious figures and groups should direct their appeals to the Russian Orthodox Church and to representatives of other churches who visit the West. They should not miss any opportunities to defend those suffering in camps and psychiatric hospitals.

CSI: Is it worthwhile writing letters, sending parcels or getting in contact with the camp authorities?

Anatoli Koryagin: A very important question. You know that the Red Cross is not allowed to help prisoners in the Soviet Union. That is unjust - these people are being kept imprisoned under inhuman conditions. It is my view that the Red Cross should help them. We must get the Soviet authorities, who do not allow it at present, to permit the sending of parcels with vitamins and medicines to political prisoners, who desperately need them. This could best be achieved through collective appeals to the responsible Soviet authorities. And if you get negative replies you must make them public and make sure that the West notices how the Soviet Union treats those people who are suffering. That is my advice. You should never remain silent if you receive a negative answer. If you get no answer, that too should be publicised and explained as a characteristic of the Soviet system. For if the authorities refuse to give an answer, they cannot be directly accused. If that happens more than once, that is a tacit negative reply. And you should speak out about it.

CSI: You have called at a press conference for the setting up of an international tribunal to examine the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR. We would like to support you in this, how can we best do that?

Anatoli Koryagin: I would like you to give publicity for such an idea. Tell as many people as possible about it, so that they consider it, participate and express their opinion on it. It is very important that all people living in freedom hear of it. We should never forget that prisoners are human beings like us, and that they are suffering as we would. We must do everything so that they do not ever have to go through such experiences again.

INTERVIEWKORYAGIN DEFENDS SOVIET POLITICAL PRISONERS

Dr ANATOLI KORYAGIN, a psychiatrist by profession, was arrested in February 1981 and sentenced to seven years' strict regime labour camp and five years' internal exile for his opposition to Soviet abuse of psychiatry and for carrying out independent examinations of dissidents under threat of internment in psychiatric hospitals. He was freed from labour camp on 18 February, and he emigrated to Switzerland with his family on 24 April. Since his arrival in the West, he has spoken vigorously in defence of prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union, especially those detained in psychiatric hospitals. During his camp sentence Dr Koryagin became an Orthodox Christian, and he is soon to be baptised in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.

This interview was conducted by Christian Solidarity International, and we reproduce it with their kind permission.

CSI: Could you say something about the situation of Christians in psychiatric hospitals.

Anatoli Koryagin: The situation for religious believers does not in fact differ from that of other prisoners. The believers often have stronger convictions. So it happens, above all at the beginning when the authorities are trying to break the will of the prisoner, that the situation of the believer is worse than that of other prisoners. One should stress, however, that the guards and KGB officers (if they get nothing out of a prisoner) do take note of the fact that he is strong and firm in his faith. Then they no longer apply special measures to him, except on the direct orders of the KGB.

CSI: Do you have information about individual Christians in psychiatric detention?

Anatoli Koryagin: It is very hard to say anything concrete. When the doors of a psychiatric clinic close behind a prisoner, the information reaching the outside is just as sparing as from a labour camp or prison. Of course, it is a psychiatric clinic, but first of all it is a prison. Only rarely do concrete details become known. We know only that people there suffer day in day out.

CSI: What can we do for people in psychiatric clinics?

Anatoli Koryagin: Defend them without ceasing and demand their release, work with those who are campaigning for them in the USSR, with religious figures and organisations which, I believe, could come into being in the USSR in the near future - for there is a lot of talk now of a rebirth of the Russian Orthodox Church. Many people, above all young people, are turning to Christianity. That is understandable, for the ideology of Communism and Marxism has lost so much credibility that a truly thinking person can no longer accept it. In the soul of man there is a spiritual vacuum. This is filled above all with the religious thoughts of Christianity. The increase in the number of religious believers is visible, even if there are no statistics.

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