



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

9 February 1990

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Dear Charles,

Student and Academic Campaign for Soviet Jews:  
Letter from Mr Trenner

Thank you for your letter of 27 January enclosing one from Mr Justyn Trenner of the Student and Academic Campaign for Soviet Jews. I enclose a draft reply.

In the light of the final paragraph of Mr Trenner's letter, we recommend that a sentence on the Moscow Conference be included in the Prime Minister's speech to the Board of Deputies on 18 February. The following passage could be inserted after the final sentence in the section on Soviet Jewry:

" ... all injustices are put right. The Soviet authorities well know that we have yet to make up our minds about attending the human rights conference in Moscow next year. They know that we expect progress in their human rights record to be sustained."

Yours ever,

(R H T Gozney)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street



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c. Tronner  
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*From the Private Secretary*

9 February 1990

Thank you for your letter of 26 January to the Prime Minister about the CSCE Conference in Moscow in 1991. I have been asked to reply.

In January last year we agreed in principle to a CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension in Moscow in 1991 provided that the considerable progress over the human rights situation was maintained. Over the past year there has been a continued improvement in the Soviet Union's human rights performance. A major legislative reform process is under way to create a State based on the rule of law. But as you recognise there is still a long way to go.

The situation of Soviet Jewry has also changed, in large part for the better. Jewish communities are no longer automatically prevented from practising their religion. There are now over one hundred synagogues functioning in the USSR. There is a new law on religion coming before the Supreme Soviet. The cultural life of Soviet Jewry is once again beginning to develop. Freedom of expression is openly practised by Soviet Jews, as illustrated recently by the successful Jewish conference held in Moscow. Jewish emigration is now running at record levels, with a new law on emigration to be considered further at the next session of the Supreme Soviet later this month.

On the other hand, only half of the Jewish cultural groups have official recognition. There are still a number of long-term refuseniks denied permission to leave the USSR. A number of prisoners including Soviet Jews continue to be imprisoned on the flimsiest of pretexts. There are growing fears among Soviet Jewry of anti-semitism. William Waldegrave discussed these issues with a group of Jewish representatives when he was in Moscow recently.

We shall continue to raise individual human rights cases with the Soviet authorities until they are resolved satisfactorily. We shall underline to the Soviet authorities that we expect the human rights legislation coming before the Supreme Soviet to resolve such problems once and for all. At



Soviet suggestion we are sending a non-governmental team with legal expertise to Moscow for talks with Soviet lawyers and parliamentarians about the new draft emigration law. Our position on our attendance at the Moscow Conference in 1991 remains that we will attend only if the progress made so far is sustained.

Charles Powell

Justyn Trenner, Esq.



STUDENT & ACADEMIC CAMPAIGN  
FOR SOVIET JEWS

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The Prime Minister,  
Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP,  
10 Downing Street,  
London SW1A 2AA.

26th January 1990

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

As you may be aware, on January 19th, the anniversary of the Vienna Concluding Document, over 450 academics, including over 350 Professors, signed a statement (enclosed) supporting Britain's position to attend a human rights conference in Moscow, in 1991, on the basis that the conditions, as set out in January last year, are met.

The statement points to the fact that, one year on, none of the conditions have been met. For example, Soviet Jews continue to be refused visas on the most spurious grounds, anti-Semitic groups flourish, youth groups experience difficulties with the authorities when trying to meet and the emigration bill does not conform with international law.

Last year 212 MPs and 228 MEPs publicly stated that Britain should not attend the Moscow conference so long as basic human rights continue to be abused. In September over 50 Students' Unions signed a similarly worded statement, now followed by the academics petition. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of MPs, MEPs, student union leaders and academics are not Jewish and come from all over the UK. Clearly there is a growing concern within Britain for Soviet abuse of human rights.

I understand that next month you will be addressing the Board of Deputies for British Jews and I know many of us involved in Soviet Jewry will be attending solely to hear your views on the Moscow conference. We trust your position has not changed and that the strong and admirable resolve the Government has shown to date will continue.

Yours sincerely,

*Justyn Trenner*

Justyn Trenner  
CHAIRPERSON