

blind copy for No. 10. - Garden Rooms



Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01- 233 5652

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Mrs Rita Eker and Mrs Margaret Rigal  
Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry  
148 Granville Road  
LONDON NW2

Your reference

Our reference

Date 25 February 1981

*Dear Mrs Eker and Mrs Rigal*

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 16 February to the Prime Minister.

We agree that the release of Mendelevich and the recent increase in successful first-time visa applications are moves in the right direction, but we have noted too that these measures have not included long-term 'refuseniks'. It is difficult to say exactly what prompted the Russians to act in this way. The Congress is certainly one possibility, but I hope that action by our and other Western delegations at Madrid on human rights issues was helpful.

We are looking into the question of further representations to the Russians, either at Madrid or in Moscow and I agree that recent developments may offer a good opportunity.

*Yours sincerely*

*Nigel Sheinwald*

N E Sheinwald  
East European & Soviet Department

file BK

18 February 1981

I am replying on the Prime Minister's behalf to your letter to her of 16 February about the situation in the Soviet Union.

Your letter is receiving attention and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

Mrs. Rita Eker and  
Mrs. Margaret Rigal

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WOMENS Campaign for  
Soviet Jewry

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18 February 1981

I enclose a letter which the Prime Minister has received from the Co-Chairmen of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry.

I should be grateful if you could arrange for a reply to be sent to Mrs. Eker and Mrs. Rigal on the Prime Minister's behalf with a copy to us for our records in due course.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

Francis Richards, Esq.

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# WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FOR SOVIET JEWRY

Co-Chairmen: RITA EKER, MARGARET RIGAL

148 Granville Road, London NW2  
Tel: 01-459 7147

MR/DC

16th February, 1981.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP.,  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, S.W.1.

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Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

We are hoping that with the start of the twenty-sixth Communist Party Congress in Moscow later this month the Soviet Authorities will be more willing to listen to international representations.

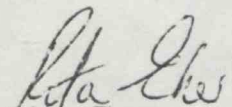
We are asking all signatories of the Helsinki Agreement to take this opportunity to approach the Soviet Government on behalf of the Prisoners of Conscience and long-term Refuseniks whose details we had sent them in our evidence for the Madrid Review. We should be most grateful if you would add your voice to theirs in aid of these innocent victims of KGB persecution who are still suffering within the USSR.

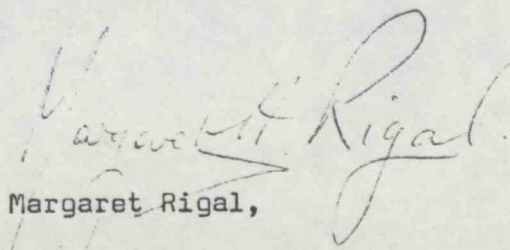
The issuing of a few more visas to non-Refusenik Jews in Moscow shows that the USSR is sensitive to criticisms that have already been voiced. Unfortunately, this new attitude does not help those who have been treated as outcasts, dismissed from their work and held up to public abuse during their long, still-continuing, wait.

We are most grateful to our delegation at Madrid for the lead they have given to all who care for Human Rights and we are sure that the visas being offered now would not have been given without its help.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

  
Rita Eker and  
Co-Chairmen,

  
Margaret Rigal,

Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry.