



FCS/84/250

HOME SECRETARY

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Pr. 17/9

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Prime Minister

You earlier agreed that we should try to spread the burden provided that there was no risk of any prisoners being sent back to Russia.

CDP
17/9

Soviet Prisoners of the Afghan Resistance

1. Thank you for your letter of 10 August agreeing to sound out George Miller about his exploring the possibility of resettling Naumov and Chukin in other Western countries. I should be interested to hear how he responded to this idea. In the meantime, you might like to have an account of the further discussions with our EC partners and allies, mentioned in my minute of 16 July.

2. These consultations have shown that, while some of our EC partners - the Italians and the Dutch - have been asked by private organisations for a statement of their attitude in principle to applications from Soviet soldiers, only the Americans and the Canadians have admitted Soviet soldiers or are actively considering doing so.

3. The Canadians have received applications on behalf of five Soviet soldiers; while the Americans have now resettled a total of six; two last November and four more in August this year.

4. The Americans seem to be thinking on similar lines to ourselves. In particular they share our concern to spread the burden between Western governments. To this end they recently made a demarche in a number of Western capitals, about which they kept us informed.

5. We have also discussed with the Americans possible mechanisms for future consultation between potential resettlement countries. The Americans seem to accept that it would be worth envisaging a form of discreet consultation between Embassies in Washington to help minimise problems in the handling of



future cases. For the time being, the Americans believe that the Pakistan Government, who have recently come under intense Soviet pressure, do not intend in the near future to exfiltrate further Soviet prisoners for resettlement in the West. The Americans have told us, however, that this breathing-space may not last indefinitely.

6. Looking to the future, we shall continue to make clear to the Americans and others that we should prefer to leave it to private organisations to make the running in bringing out Soviet soldiers - the Americans, for their part, appear to envisage a somewhat greater role for Governments than we should like - and that we should be very reluctant to consider further cases until it is clear that other Western Governments are prepared to take on a fair share of the burden.

7. The need for caution is reinforced, I believe, by the further three applications for asylum brought to the attention of the Prime Minister by Sandy Gall on Independent Television News. You will be considering, no doubt, how we should respond. My own preliminary view is that we should adopt a holding line similar to that which I suggested in my minute of 16 July might be used with George Miller, namely that any decision on further resettlement cases must take into account the willingness of other Western Governments to share the burden and the ability of Rykov and Khlan to settle down in Britain.

8. I note that the three men brought to the Prime Minister's attention by Gall do not assert that they are in any imminent danger of being sent back to the Soviet Union. There is also a possibility that there may be some duplication of effort. One of the men named by Gall, VLADISLAV NAUMOV, may be the VLADIMIR NAUMOV put forward by George Miller. And it is conceivable that some of these men are already being considered by the Americans or the Canadians. We are trying to clarify this. Early action with respect to Gall's three candidates is in any case made difficult by the Pakistan Government's



present attitude to which I have referred above.

9. You should also be aware of a further development relating to the two men already in this country, Rykov and Khlan. Lord Bethell has very recently telephoned officials in the FCO to say that both have applied for permanent residence in Canada, their papers having apparently been filed three weeks ago with the Canadian High Commission in London. Their sponsor is a Ukrainian organisation in Canada. Lord Bethell explained that in his view Khlan in particular was totally bewildered by life in the West and would benefit from settlement in Canada in an agricultural Ukrainian or Russian speaking community. Lord Bethell asked us to consider approaching the Canadian authorities in support of both applications, or at least that of Khlan. We have already been told by the Canadians that they would not be prepared to resettle Soviet soldiers already admitted to a third country. It seems highly unlikely therefore that the applications by Rykov and Khlan will be successful. Moreover, any approach to the Canadians by us on these lines would be inconsistent with our efforts to persuade other Western countries to share the burden of such cases. If you agree, I think it would be best to explain this frankly to Lord Bethell.

10. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

GEOFFREY HOWE

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
17 September, 1984

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... You should also be aware of a further development relating to the two men already in this country, Lykov and Babin. Lykov (Babin) has very recently telephoned officials in the CIA to say that they have applied for permanent residence in Canada. Their papers having recently been filed three weeks ago with the Canadian High Commission in London. Their sponsor is a Russian organization in Canada. Lord Beshell explained that in his view there is no reason why they should be treated as an alien and would handle their retention in Canada in an appropriate manner on Russian grounds. Lord Beshell asked us to consider approaching the Canadian authorities in regard to both applications, or at least that of Lykov, as they have already been told by the Canadian that they would not be prepared to resettle Babin unless already admitted to a third country. It seems highly unlikely therefore that the application by Lykov and Babin will be successful. However, any approach to the Canadian by us on these issues would be inconsistent with our efforts to persuade other Western countries to share the burden of such cases. If you agree, I think it would be best to explain this frankly to Lord Beshell.

16. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and Sir Robert Armstrong.

SECRETARY HOME

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
17 September 1984

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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

10 August 1984

Dear Foreign Secretary,

Thank you for your minute of 16 July about Soviet prisoners of the Afghan Resistance.

I am grateful to you for agreeing to seek to co-ordinate action with our friends and allies on the resettlement of Soviet prisoners and I am content with the line proposed in your minute.

For our part, we shall as you suggest sound out George Miller about his exploring the possibility of resettlement of Naumov and Chukin in other Western countries. But we shall, of course, also need to bear in mind, as the Prime Minister has commented, that if no other friendly country is prepared to accept such prisoners we may need to take them in if there is a serious risk that otherwise they may be returned to the Soviet Union.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,
Nigel Partridge

Approved by the Home Secretary and
signed in his absence

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC., MP.

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