

Ref. A085/2337

PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister
A speaking
note for
Cabinet.
CDP
11/9.

HETMAN

We have had no reason to put in hand the contingency plan, and we are therefore on course for the main plan.

2. At 9.00 am tomorrow morning, 12 September, the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires will be summoned to see Mr Goodall at 11.00 am. Sir Bryan Cartledge will seek an appointment with Mr Suslov in Moscow for 2.30 pm Moscow time (11.30 am London time). Your messages to President Reagan and President Mitterrand will be despatched at 9.00 am. The news will break at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regular news conference at 12.30 pm.

3. As the meeting of the Cabinet is relatively late, and the Soviet Chargé will have been seen by the time it begins, you will probably want to give the Cabinet advance notice.

4. You could tell your colleagues that it is to be announced later in the morning that an important official of the Soviet Embassy has sought asylum in this country. The official concerned was in fact Deputy Head of the KGB Residency in London from June 1982, and had recently become Head of it. This represents a great coup for our security and intelligence services, to whom he has given a very great deal of extremely valuable information about Soviet intelligence activities in this country and about the Soviet intelligence organisation generally.

5. The Soviet Chargé has been summoned to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to be formally told that the official concerned has sought asylum, that Her Majesty's Government had been greatly shocked and concerned by what he has had to tell them and the extent of unacceptable Soviet intelligence activities in this country, and that 25 Soviet intelligence officials

engaging in intelligence activities are to be expelled and must leave the country within three weeks. He will be further told that any retaliation by the Soviet Government on British personnel in Moscow would be entirely unacceptable, and could lead to further expulsions from here.

6. The American, French and other intelligence allies are being informed, and are of course being provided with relevant information made available by the defector.

7. The overall ceiling on the number of Soviet officials in London is being correspondingly reduced, from 234 to 211 (two of the Soviet officials concerned are staff members of international organisations). In order that the two Embassies in London and Moscow may be sufficiently well staffed to carry out their functions, the ceiling on Soviet diplomatic staff in London is being slightly increased (within this overall total) to 46. This should help to discourage reprisals against British diplomatic staff in Moscow.

8. This move may inevitably cast some shadow on Anglo/Soviet diplomatic relations, at any rate for a time; but in the face of this defection and of the information it has produced it would not have been right or understandable to respond less vigorously.

RIA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

11 September 1985