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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

6 July 1987

Dear Lynn,

SOVIET JEWS

The Prime Minister received a delegation from the World Conference on Soviet Jewry this afternoon, led by Dr. Kopelowitz.

The delegation expressed gratitude for the way in which the Prime Minister had dealt with the issue of Soviet Jews during her visit to the Soviet Union. This had been the strongest blow struck so far for the liberty and rights of Soviet Jews. They also expressed appreciation for Mr. Mellor's remarks to their Conference earlier today.

The delegation were pessimistic about the prospects for Soviet Jewry. The numbers allowed to leave had increased only slightly and remained far short of those achieved in the late 1970s (although they might still reach 10/12000 this year). The Soviet authorities were applying a regressive definition of the family and of national security considerations in the Emigration law. Their fear was that Gorbachev would let out a few thousand now, have a successful Summit and then close the gates completely. There had been no significant improvement in the conditions of Jews in the Soviet Union. Those who asked to leave faced immediate discrimination and penalties. They hoped that the Prime Minister would urge President Reagan to press the issue hard at a Summit. They also hoped that the Soviets would be urged to fulfil their tentative commitment to institute flights to Israel via Rumania.

The Prime Minister recalled the very different starting point of the Soviet authorities, schooled in a philosophy which gave little account to the individual. Some progress had been achieved. She suspected that the Russians might be holding back further concessions to gain the maximum political impact, for instance in connection with a Middle East peace conference. We would use every opportunity to keep up pressure on them. There was so much more to do.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES POWELL

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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# The Board of Deputies of British Jews

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

R14/7

10th July, 1987

Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

mt  
Prime Minister  
COO  
14/7

Jean Pierre Mitterand

I write this short note to thank you most warmly for receiving representatives from the World Conference on Soviet Jewry which met in London over last weekend.

As I mentioned in my remarks, London was chosen for the venue as a tribute to you for all your efforts on behalf of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

We were very encouraged by your remarks, and we wish you every success during your forthcoming visit to the United States.

Vygodous,  
Lionel Kopelowitz

(Dr.) Lionel Kopelowitz JP