

SUBJECT
CC MASTER.
DPS.

SECRET



File
PRIME MINISTER'S ^{FCO}
PERSONAL MESSAGE ^{PC-}
SERIAL No. 94/89 ^{OK 500}

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

18 May, 1989.

Dear General Secretary,

We have established the practice of speaking frankly about any subject, however wide our differences. This has done much to reduce the climate of suspicion which characterised the past. I am writing to you now in that spirit. I do not intend to disclose the contents of this letter.

I have today approved a decision which I had hoped not to take. As your advisers know well, successive British Governments have pursued a resolute and consistent policy over the presence in Britain of representatives of the Soviet Intelligence Services.

I had hoped that the action taken by my Government in 1985 would clear away, once and for all, a major obstacle both in British/Soviet relations and to the creation of more co-operative and friendly relationships in Europe. I have been disappointed. Your country's intelligence services have, step by step, reconstructed their staff in London. Their operatives have engaged in activities which no Government could accept. We have expressed our concern repeatedly and at many levels. No corrective action has been taken by the Soviet side, and we are left with no alternative but to require the removal of certain intelligence officers whose activities in Britain have nothing to do with their stated purpose for being in Britain and are hostile to our security.

SECRET

We welcome representatives of your growing political, commercial, cultural and press interests in Britain. Their presence here is important to our expanding relationship. The presence of your intelligence officers works in precisely the opposite direction.

I have decided to depart from our previous practice and not to foreclose the posts occupied by the departing intelligence personnel, in the expectation that these posts will in future be occupied by Soviet officials engaged extensively and openly in the promotion of legitimate business. I have also given instructions that publicity for the removal of your intelligence personnel is not to be given by any British official. These have not been easy decisions. But they are intended to offer a positive way forward. I shall be looking for a similarly positive approach from the Soviet side.

I am sorry that I have to write to you in this vein, so soon after your outstandingly successful visit to London. But I would be wrong to conceal from you my deep concern about a problem we should surely put behind us.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

President M. S. Gorbachev

Date 18 May



Send to
Stephen Wall, FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

~~Debbie A.~~

~~Ed. you please
hold on to
this until we
arrive a decision
from FCO on
the date.~~

Date 18 May

→ FCO

Stephen Wall

CDI

9/15

DSF (Revised Sept 85)

SECRET

DRAFT: ~~minute~~/letter/~~teletype~~/~~dispatch~~/~~note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM: PRIME MINISTER

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO: PRESIDENT GORBACHEV

Copies to:

slhbfj

~~TOP SECRET~~

Secret

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~RESTRICTED~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

We have established the practice of speaking frankly about any subject, however wide our differences. This has done much to reduce the climate of suspicion which characterised the past. I am writing to you now in that spirit. I do not intend to disclose the contents of this letter.

I have today approved a decision which I had hoped not to take. As your advisers know well, successive British Governments have pursued a resolute and consistent policy over the presence in Britain of representatives of the Soviet Intelligence Services.

/I

Enclosures flag(s)

SECRET

SECRET

I had hoped that the action taken by my Government in 1985 would clear away, once and for all, a major obstacle both in British/Soviet relations, and to the creation of more cooperative and friendly relationships in Europe. I have been disappointed. Your country's intelligence services have, step by step, reconstructed their staff in London. Their operatives have engaged in activities which no Government could accept. We have expressed our concern repeatedly and at many levels. No corrective action has been taken by the Soviet side, and we are left with no alternative but to require the removal of certain intelligence officers whose activities in Britain have nothing to do with their stated purpose for being in Britain and are hostile to our security.

We welcome representatives of your growing political, commercial, cultural and press interests in Britain. Their presence here is important to our expanding relationship. The presence of your intelligence officers works in precisely the opposite direction.

/I have

SECRET

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

PRIVACY MARKING

.....

In Confidence

I have decided to depart from our previous practice and not to foreclose the posts occupied by the departing intelligence personnel, in the expectation that these posts will in future be occupied by Soviet officials engaged extensively and openly in the promotion of legitimate business. I have also given instructions that publicity for the removal of your intelligence personnel is not to be given by any British official. These have not been easy decisions. But they are intended to offer a positive way forward. I shall be looking for a similarly positive approach from the Soviet side.

I am sorry that I have to write to you in this vein, so soon after your outstandingly successful visit to London. But I would be wrong to conceal from you my deep concern about a problem we should surely put behind us.