

Saint Vmos

1 September, 1980.

Human Rights Trials in the Soviet Union

The Prime Minister has seen and warmly approves the text of the statement issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesman of 29 August following the sentencing of Father Gleb Yakunin.

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STATEMENT BY FCO SPOKESMAN

PRIME MINISTER

Issued by the

FCO today

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29/8

HUMAN RIGHTS TRIALS IN THE SOVIET UNION

1. We have learned with great concern of the sentencing of Father Gleb Yakunin to the harsh term of 5 years hard labour and 5 years internal exile. This sentence and the continuing trial of Tatiana Velikanova, following the large numbers of arrests of Soviet human rights campaigners earlier this year, once again call into question the seriousness of the Soviet Union's commitment to implement the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. These actions reinforce our view that there must be a searching examination of Soviet implementation of the Final Act, including its human rights provisions, at the Madrid Review Meeting later this year.

2. We shall follow very closely the fate of the many others still under detention in the Soviet Union since this cannot but have its effect on the course of the Review Meeting, the preparatory meeting for which begins in 10 days' time.

Unattributable

3. A First Secretary of the British Embassy at Moscow was refused entrance to the courts where Father Yakunin and Miss Velikanova were tried. The exclusion of foreign observers makes a mockery of Soviet claims that the trials were 'open'.

For issue at today's 12.30

AG

News Dept.

(29/8)

STATEMENT BY FCO SPOKESMAN

TRIAL AND SENTENCE OF VYACHESLAV BAKHMIN

We have heard with deep concern of the sentencing in the Soviet Union of Vyacheslav Bakhmin to a term of three years imprisonment. It is disturbing that anyone should be tried and convicted for nothing more than a determination to expose the abuse of psychiatry for political purposes.

This action is a further illustration of the repressive attitude of the Soviet authorities towards those who campaign for greater respect for human rights. The Soviet record in this field will have to be subjected to close scrutiny at the Madrid CSCE meeting.

We shall follow closely the fate of others in the Soviet Union who have attempted to investigate and expose the misuse of psychiatry for political ends.

Aug 29 1980