



cc: fco.

8.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 June 1981

Dear Nicholas,

Thank you for your letter of 8 June.
I am delighted to hear that the Yalta
memorial appeal is proceeding satisfactorily.

There are the obvious complications
about a message to be read out at the
unveiling ceremony but I will certainly
think carefully about your request.

Yours ever,

(sgd) MT

The Lord Bethell

81



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Memorials

8/7

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 June 1981

Lord BETHELL

I enclose, together with a copy of her reply, a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Lord Bethell about the Yalta memorial.

I should be grateful to receive in due course advice as to whether or not the Prime Minister should send a message to the Committee.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Francis Richards, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

BK.



FROM
NICHOLAS
BETHELL

TELEPHONE
01-402-6877

73 SUSSEX SQUARE
LONDON W2 2SS

The Rt. Hon. Mrs Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON S.W.1.

8th June 1981

Dear Margaret,

When you received Mrs Avital Sharansky and me on April 29th, you were kind enough to ask how our Yalta memorial was progressing. So I thought that I would send you a copy of our new fund raising brochure that has just been printed.

As you will see from page 2 of the brochure our appeal has gone quite well. We are most of the way there. But we still need a few thousand pounds to pay for the services to be provided by the local authority in perpetuity.

We do not anticipate very much trouble in raising this extra money and we very much hope to have the work finished and to arrange a date for the ceremony of dedication quite soon. The ceremony will probably be at the end of this year, possibly at the beginning of next year.

I must repeat, although I need hardly do so, how tremendously grateful we all are for what you did to make our enterprise possible. I will write to you again when we have set a date for the ceremony and will ask you to consider issuing a short message to the committee, which could be read out at the ceremony. I thought that I would warn you, so that you can think about whether or not you could do this.

Yours ever

Nicholas

Dissident's wife meets PM




PRIME MINISTER Mrs Margaret Thatcher meets Avital Sharansky, wife of imprisoned Russian dissident Anatoly Sharansky at Downing Street during her recent mission to Britain.


Mrs Sharansky appealed to the Prime Minister for Government support to get her husband freed from his 13-year sentence. He is currently in solitary confinement. Also at the meeting was Mrs Rita Eker, of the 35s Golders Green Group, and Euro-MP Nicholas Bethell.

Last week members of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, including women from Golders Green, disrupted a concert by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall.

Concertgoers were confronted by the banner-waving protesters demanding Mr Sharansky's release.



YALTA VICTIMS MEMORIAL



'The story of the enforced repatriation of a host of Soviet citizens, left stranded and abandoned in Hitler's Europe at the end of the Second World War, and sent home to be shot, starved, driven to death in labour camps or tortured by Stalin's police, is one of the most disgraceful chapters in our history.'

Edward Crankshaw in *The Observer*, 1979

'The whole episode is not just a bit of tragic history best forgotten. The facts . . . are a matter of public concern because they involve the public policies of this country and the way these policies were arrived at and implemented . . . They also provide a valuable reminder of the dangers of excluding elementary considerations of justice and humanity from the conduct of diplomacy in the misguided belief that this can serve the national interest.'

The Times, leading article, June 1979.

'The British failed to see that the Soviet state had no independent judiciary, that the MVD or NKVD was the sole law in the land, and that returning these people to the Soviet Union was turning them over to naked horror. It was astonishing that the British, with their fine sense of justice and the administration of law, should have been so thoroughly remiss in examining the sort of justice that was likely to be meted out to the repatriates.

'The great majority of people the British forced back from Austria [to Yugoslavia] were simple peasants. They had no murders on their hands . . .

Their only crime was fear of Communism and the reputation of Communists.

'The British did completely the wrong thing in putting these people back across the border, as *we* did completely the wrong thing in shooting them all!

Milovan Djilas, Vice-President of Yugoslavia until 1954, in an interview in *Encounter*, 1980.

Official permission has been received to set up a fountain in memory of the many hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women and children who were repatriated, most of them forcibly, to the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia by Great Britain and her allies between 1944 and 1947. The site is an ideal one, in the centre of London, on the grass triangle on the north side of Thurloe Square, opposite the main entrance to the Victoria & Albert Museum. A number of stone benches will be put up round the fountain, and the site will be surrounded with shrubs and trees, to screen it from passing traffic and create a pleasant and peaceful oasis.

Our chief practical consideration has been to make the fountain as durable as possible, and as secure against defacement, damage and decay. Provision must also be made for the upkeep of the fountain and the cost of water supply in perpetuity. In this connection the Committee is extremely grateful for the co-operative and helpful attitude of the Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council, the Thames Water Authority and the London Electricity Board, whose staff have made a complicated task far easier.

The Committee has also been immensely encouraged by the desire of hundreds of individual subscribers to take part in atoning for a dishonourable policy which, for fear of an outcry at the time, was concealed not only from the public but from Parliament as well. Our supporters include Members of Parliament of all parties, many former members of the British armed forces and several retired members of the Foreign Service, some of them of the highest rank.

A sum of £13,000 has so far been raised, but to meet the ever increasing cost of constructing the fountain and securing its future, a further sum in the region of £8,000 will be needed. Those who have already subscribed – some of them more than once – are most warmly thanked again. If each of them can persuade a friend to follow their generous and constructive example, the target will very soon be reached.

Contributions should be made to Yalta Victims Memorial Fund, Coutts & Co., 440 Strand, London WC2R 0QS.

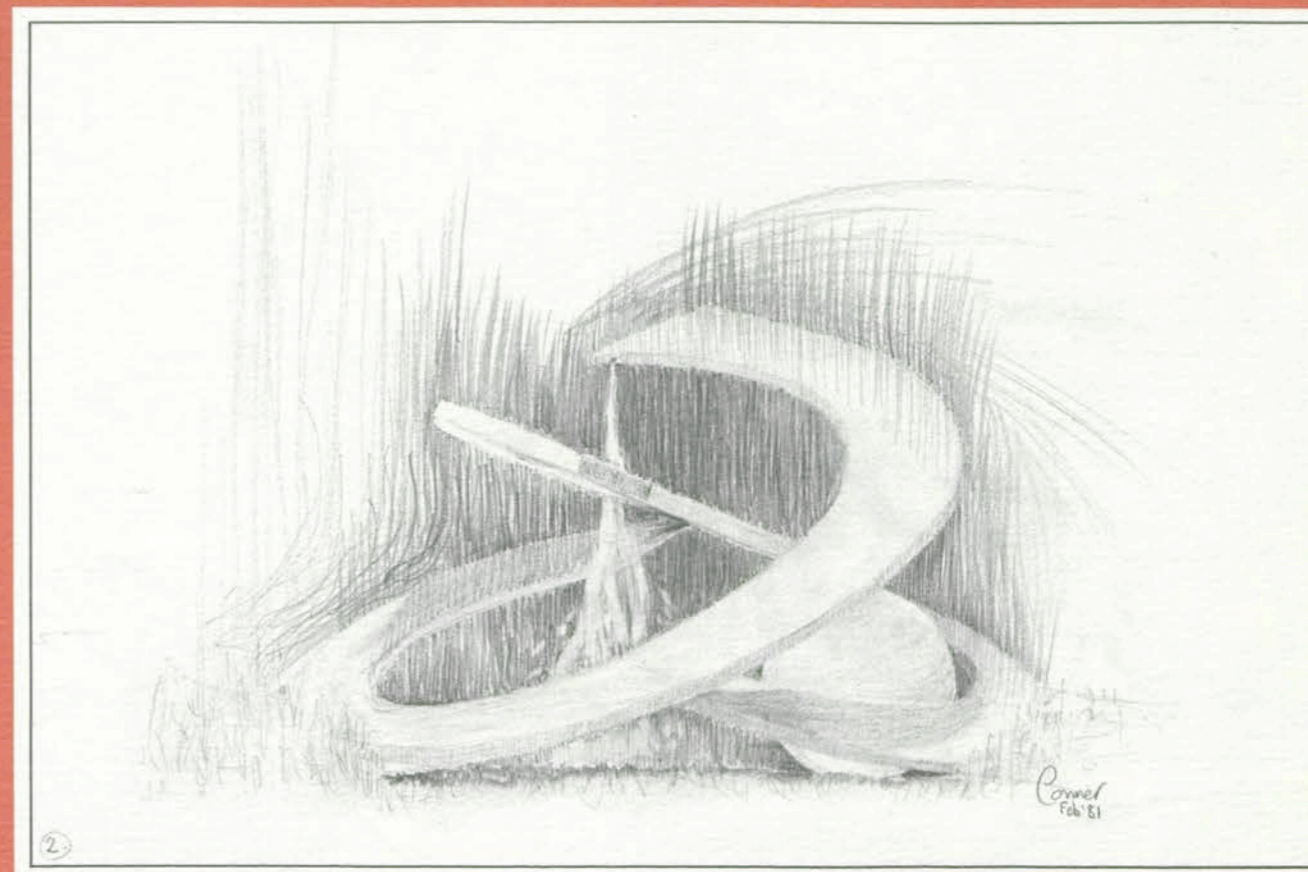
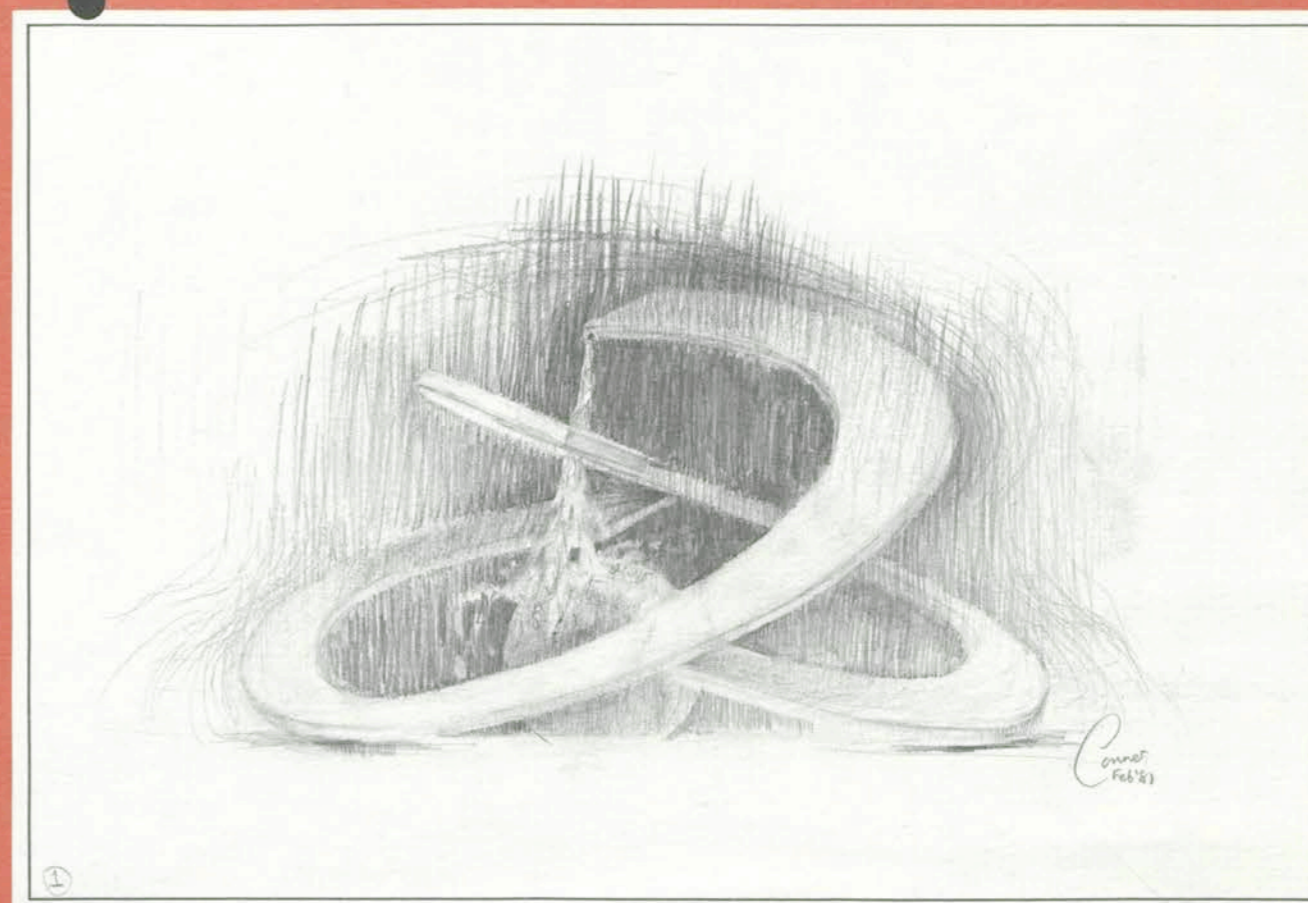
Full historical details of the repatriation policy have been released under the thirty-year rule, and may be found in two notable books: *Victims of Yalta* by Nikolai Tolstoy (Hodder & Stoughton, and Corgi Books paperback) and *The Last Secret* by Nicholas Bethell (André Deutsch and Futura).

Artist's notes on The Sculpture

The tragedy of the victims of Yalta is the inspiration for the sculpture. Rather than acting only to regret those past decisions, may it also be a positive reminder for the future.

Since we live in a free country where contemporary art has been allowed to emerge I wanted to avoid propaganda art, such as one would find in communist countries. They would produce something like a group of human figures holding their heads in woe. I therefore have taken the essence of the subject which is the helplessness of individuals caught between the forces of nations.

The sculpture is in working process and the theme and basic design are begun. There are two huge stone rings emerging from the earth, similar to the prehistoric slabs of Stonehenge. Surrounded by these rings, rather as the victims were surrounded by the forces of national politics, is a stone sphere floating in a pool. Like those victims this stone is caught by one jet of water from a ring (Fig. 1). This forces it across the pool only to be buffeted by another water spray, and so on endlessly (Fig. 2). Thus the round stone is constantly at the mercy of the powerful jets, in the same way as the victims were subjected to relentless diplomatic manoeuvres.



Here in stone and water is the essence of the tragedy of the Yalta Victims. The unshielded sphere is caught and buffeted between the conflicting forces of water as they were between the forces of politics.

YALTA VICTIMS MEMORIAL APPEAL

Committee:

Sir Bernard Braine, DL, MP (Chairman)
Lord Bethell, MEP
Sir Nicholas Cheetham KCMG
Sir John Foster, KBE, QC
The Right Hon. J. Grimond, PC, MP
Lord St. Oswald, DL, MC
Professor Hugh Thomas
The Hon. John Jolliffe (Hon. Secretary and Treasurer)

Sponsors:

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Neville Sandelson, MP
Malcolm Muggeridge
The Right Hon. Donald Stewart, PC, MP
Count Nikolai Tolstoy
Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper
Dame Rebecca West, DBE