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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 December, 1984

Dear David,

Visit of the Supreme Soviet Delegation

In your letter of 30 November you asked if there were any points which we would wish to suggest you might make in reply to Richard Clements' letter of 29 November to Robin Butler.

It might be worth pointing out to Clements that formally speaking the visit is a Parliamentary event. Mr Gorbachev's delegation will be coming at the invitation of the British Group of the INter-Parliamentary Union. The Government does, however, attach considerable importance to Mr Gorbachev's presence as the leader of the delegation. We regard it as, to some extent, an acknowledgement of the efforts made by the Government to improve UK/Soviet relations and in part as a recognition of the fact that both the Prime Minister and Secretary of State have visited the Soviet Union this year.

As far as the question of demonstrations are concerned, we agree with the line taken by Mr Kinnock that peaceful demonstrations are a traditional part of British political life and that there is no way in which, provided they remain peaceful, that they could or should be stopped. As for the possibility of suggesting to the Soviet delegation that they might wish to appoint one of their members to be a spokesman and to receive petitions from various groups in this country who might want to make points about civil rights in the Soviet Union, this has been under consideration; we will see whether this or any variation on this theme might be accepted by the Russians.

*Yours Sincerely,
Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

David Barclay Esq
10 Downing Street

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UK / Soviet Fed. Soviet Union 143.

London and Westminster City

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