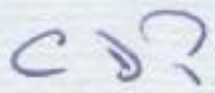


SOVIET STUDIES IN BRITISH UNIVERSITIES

You saw the papers on this over the weekend. Since you have a bilateral with the Education Secretary later today, you might use the opportunity to raise it with him.

The points which you might make are:

- it has been brought to your attention that there has been a fairly calamitous decline in Soviet Studies at British universities. A report on this rests with his Department.
- the decision in 1979 to terminate Russian teaching and Soviet Studies at some 20 universities has deprived us of the ability to build up a corps of future experts on the Soviet Union. This will weaken our overall intelligence and research effort, and diminish our credibility in this area with the United States.
- you want to see action taken to remedy this. It is partly for the UGC. But we should select some universities as centres of excellence for Soviet Studies. And we shall need some new money - say f1 million. We might put that up and let the universities and polytechnics bid for it.
- this is all relevant to your visit to the Soviet Union in June. You would like to make an announcement then that the Government will be providing an additional sum to finance Soviet Studies in this country.
- you would like the Education Secretary to give you a worked up proposal within one month.


Charles Powell

19 March 1990

c: soviet (MJ)