

IN CONFIDENCE

CCF



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 November 1986

Prime Minister  
Oh dear! This is probably right, but perhaps Lady Long should speak directly to Lord Wilson to explain COP 187 Jan

Dear Charles,

Proposed Visit by Lord Wilson to the Soviet Union

The Foreign Secretary would like you to be aware of the problems arising from a proposal by Lord Wilson to visit the Soviet Union from 27 November to 3 December.

Lord Wilson will be accompanying representatives of the I.C.E. Group Ltd, a commercial firm interested in hotel construction. He has asked to stay at the Embassy.

This raises two problems:

(i) the poor commercial reputation of the I.C.E. Group, whose organisation of an exhibition in China in July 1985 led to numerous complaints to the DTI from exhibitors. Sir Bryan Cartledge believes that it would be damaging to be too closely associated with this Group.

(ii) Lord Wilson's own failing memory and increasing tendency (demonstrated during his last visit in 1983) to indulge in irrelevant and repetitive reminiscence at meetings with Soviet hosts.

For both reasons, we believe that the Embassy should not be too closely associated with Lord Wilson's visit, and that their involvement should be limited to what is required by the courtesy due to an ex-Prime Minister.

We therefore propose to tell Lord Wilson's office that it is established policy that our Embassies should not be seen to be quite so closely and extensively associated with one commercial company as Lord Wilson's stay would imply. We shall go on to suggest that while engaged in I.C.E. business Lord Wilson should stay at a hotel, along with other company representatives. The Ambassador will however be happy to put him up for that part of his time in which he is not engaged in commercial business, eg the weekend.

It is rather sad that we should be put in this position, which we should much prefer to avoid; but Lord Wilson shows no signs of calling a <sup>halt</sup> talk to his overseas travel.

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

C D Powell Esq  
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(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

IN CONFIDENCE

Lord Wilson  
to explain  
COP  
187 Jan  
I would be talking to the P.C.S. to protect him





10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

19 November 1986

*From the Private Secretary*

**PROPOSED VISIT BY LORD WILSON TO THE SOVIET UNION**

Thank you for your letter of 18 November about the difficulties which arise from a proposal by Lord Wilson to visit the Soviet Union.

The Prime Minister is content with the line which it is proposed to take with Lord Wilson but feels that the Foreign Secretary must really explain the matter personally to him rather than doing it through his office. We have had recent experience where pursuing the latter route has led to complications.

(C.D. POWELL)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office