



FROM  
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Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign  
and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AL

16th December 1986

Dear Geoffrey,

I am pleased to tell you that I have been granted a Soviet visa. It is for a seven-day visit to Moscow and Leningrad beginning on December 27th. It will be my first visit to the Soviet Union since 1971, during which period I have six times applied for a visa unsuccessfully.

In early 1982 I was granted a visa, but it was cancelled a day or two before my departure. I trust that the same will not happen on this occasion.

It seems very likely that the visa was issued because you mentioned the problem to Foreign Minister Shevardnadze during his visit to London in the summer. I would like once again to thank you for intervening on my behalf.

The main purpose of my visit, as I explained to Michael Llewellyn Smith, is to show my two sons a taste of the Soviet Union as a necessary part of their education. They are 19 and 17 years old. Their friend Simon Wolfson, David Wolfson's elder son, will also be coming with us.

We will only be in Moscow for five days, but I would if possible like to meet Sir Bryan Cartledge and I would be very glad if your office could let him know that I will contact him on my arrival. If he were able to arrange for me to meet a Soviet minister or senior official to discuss the effect of some of the Soviet Union's internal policies on East-West relations, including disarmament, this might be very useful. I know that the Government, with our allies, is considering how to react to the proposed conference on human rights in Moscow and I would like to discuss this with a suitable Soviet representative.

Please forgive my not signing this letter. I am dictating it on the telephone from Brussels. Thank you again very much for helping with my visa and I send you all good wishes for Christmas.

Yours ever,

H M C Watson

pp Lord Bethell

cc Michael Llewellyn Smith Esq  
Charles Powell Esq



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*With the Compliments of  
Nicholas Bethell*

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