

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 January 1987

Dear Charles,

Seminar on the Soviet Union

Thank you for your letter of 22 December. *at Harp*

We think that your selection of academics is a good one and well balanced. We also agree that Seweryn Bialer would be a good choice. He works at Colombia University, New York, but is sometimes difficult to track down. We suggest that this could best be done through our Embassy in Washington (Peter Ricketts). The Embassy might also be asked to contact Robert Conquest, who is currently at the Hoover Institute in Stanford.

It would clearly be right to pay Bialer's fare and expenses, and Robert Conquest's if he comes. Can we assume that you will meet those expenses from Cabinet Office funds?

We admit to some regret that the two journalists, Mark Frankland and Edwina Moreton, have had to be dropped. Both are very good. In the field of Soviet studies the best journalists have a contribution to make which is often as valuable as that of academics. We hope therefore that they can be viewed as reserves if any academics fall out.

/As

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



As you know from my letter of 18 December, the Foreign Secretary had hoped that at least two senior officials from the FCO could attend; but on the assumption that only one official will be invited, and that he should be an expert in Soviet affairs, we suggest that David Ratford, the Assistant Under Secretary responsible for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, should be included. As you know, his last post was as Minister at our Embassy in Moscow.

/ I enclose a revised version of the agenda, taking account of your comments.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT AGENDA

ANNEX

THE SOVIET SYSTEM UNDER GORBACHEVTERMINAL CASE, OR RIPE FOR REVIVAL ?1. General

- What are Soviet objectives internally and externally ?

~~elements of the present system~~

2. Political

- How much does it matter to the elite that the main elements of the present system (political, military, intellectual/doctrinal) should survive unchanged ?

Do they believe in it ? Could it survive loss of faith ? Is its survival a Soviet or Russian requirement ?

- Alternatively, how much change; openness; "democratisation"; economic liberalisation can the system allow ? Room for human rights ? Market forces ?

- Is proselytising and triumph of Communism worldwide still important ? Has its importance increased or decreased ?

- How far can the Russians be satisfied with improved security alone ?

3. Economic

- Will Gorbachev secure major improvement in economic performance ? Does he need to ? Does he really want to ? What are the obstacles - technical, political, intellectual, bureaucratic ?

- Why have the Russians not so far been able to work out and implement appropriate policies for themselves ? Are they likely to look to other systems for models (PRC; Hungary; GDR; Yugoslavia; the West) ?

4. The External Factor

- What has been the impact on Soviet policies of the US (Reagan) and Western Europe ? How do they view Reagan and post-Reagan ? How do they plan to influence political developments in Western Europe ?

5. The Gorbachev Factor

- How far have Soviet objectives changed under Gorbachev ? How feasible are they ? How far can he go without endangering his personal position ?

6. UK Role

- What policies should the UK adopt towards the Soviet Union ? What role for the Prime Minister, and the EC/Twelve, in the next five years ? What effect can we expect to have ?
- Can we, or should we, do anything to promote the success of the process of economic improvement ? If so how ?
- How can we influence Gorbachev/the elite/the Soviet people ? Does influencing the people matter when they have no voice ?

SOVIET UNION'S Relations. PG 6

