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PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

The two attached letters cover aspects of your visit to the Soviet Union which the Foreign Secretary wants to discuss with you later this afternoon.

In general he agrees very much with your approach, the importance of avoiding unrealistic expectations, and the need for you to focus on broad issues in very restricted session with Gorbachev.

He has a number of ideas which we might put to the Russians:

- the establishment of an annual lecture by a distinguished personality, alternately here and in the Soviet Union.
- exchanges of young members of the public service.
- exchanges of TV programmes.
- a UK/US/Soviet Conference at Ditchley on an economic theme.
- an exchange of British and Soviet weeks.

The Russians have made clear that they want to see some tangible results, in the form of agreements signed during your visit. They have suggested an inter-governmental agreement in the area of space cooperation, an upgrading of the hot line (but we never use it) and road and rail transport agreements. We need to consider these on their merits.

They have also proposed a joint statement or communique - but this could be risky.

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Finally there is a point about the Anglo-Soviet Cultural exchange programme. This had been due for signature (by Mr. Eggar) this Friday. The Russians have now suggested that it only be initialled, and signed during your visit. The content frankly does not warrant this on its own and in its present form. But the prospect of possibly doing so could give us useful leverage for extracting more concessions from the Russians, e.g., a cessation of jamming of our broadcasts and better access for Russians to our film shows in Moscow. Content to try this tactic?

Mr

CDP

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14 January, 1987.

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14 January 1987

*From the Private Secretary**Dear Lyn.***PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION**

Thank you for your two letters of 14 January, about the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union and the Anglo-Soviet Cultural Exchange Programme respectively.

On the first, I think the Prime Minister would be generally content with the approach proposed, and would share the Foreign Secretary's scepticism about trying to agree a joint statement or communiqué. She will, I am sure, wish to guard against the possibility of appearing to sign a raft of rather empty agreements, just for the sake of signing something. We should not commit ourselves to the notion of signing a package of agreements until we have a clearer idea of how substantial they will be. This will emerge as we explore the various possibilities set out in your letter with the Russians over the next few weeks.

As regards the second letter, on the Anglo-Soviet Cultural Exchange Programme, I believe that the Prime Minister would be content with the tactics proposed: that is to initial the programme this week and use the prospect of possible signature by the Prime Minister during her visit to Moscow to extract a more forthcoming Soviet response on issues of concern to us, such as jamming and access to Embassy film performances.

I am copying this letter to John Howe (Ministry of Defence), Timothy Walker (Department of Trade and Industry) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office) - none of whom will have seen the second of the letters referred to above.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES POWELL

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
 Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



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14 January 1987

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Visit to the Soviet Union

Thank you for your letter of 7 January with its helpful guidance on the Prime Minister's approach to her visit to Moscow.

The Foreign Secretary has been thinking in the light of the Prime Minister's views about the shape and focus to give to the visit. I wrote to you on 9 January with some comments on the programme, and now have your reply of 11 January which will be helpful to Mr Renton in his talks in Moscow.

Sir Geoffrey is very much aware of the political dimension of the visit both domestically and internationally. He agrees with the Prime Minister's wish to find some unusual and interesting aspects which will attract attention and show concern for human rights. We need also to set the visit in the context of the government's long term policy of developing contacts and a better understanding with the Soviet leadership and other levels of Soviet society. Sir Geoffrey's own meetings with Gromyko and Shevardnadze and those of other Ministers with the Soviet leadership - notably Lord Whitelaw and Mr Walker - add up to a sustained effort to develop contacts. If the Prime Minister's visit comes across as a demonstration of our seriousness about dialogue that will increase the domestic impact and help to avoid the danger you identify in your letter.

As to the objectives for the visit, Sir Geoffrey agrees with the note of realism in your letter. At this period in Soviet development, it will be right to focus to a large extent on broad philosophical/political discussion with Gorbachev in restricted informal session. The Prime Minister will want to assess his "new thinking" and his plans for the economy and their prospects of success. It may be difficult to get Gorbachev to budge from the Kremlin setting, but we can at least remind the Russians of the Prime Minister's talks with him at Chequers. Sir Geoffrey agrees also that we shall not want a narrow focus on arms control. The Prime Minister should discuss regional causes of tension (which Academician Sakharov singled out for attention in one of his recent press conferences). We shall want also to convince Gorbachev that human rights abuses are a brake on the developments he wants in East/West relations and to bring

/back



back some tangible improvements in the humanitarian sphere. And we shall want to use the visit to boost our chances of increasing bilateral trade and of winning some major contracts.

The Foreign Secretary would like to look at the arms control dimension of the visit after Tim Renton returns from Moscow, and will be in touch with the Prime Minister about it then. He is in broad agreement that we should not set our sights too high.

In aiming for a high profile visit of interest to press and public we should be able to exploit Gorbachev's policy of Glasnost or openness. This is already creating some opportunities. For example Tim Renton recently had an interview on arms control published in Pravda.

Sir Geoffrey thinks that in this new climate we should aim to agree with the Russians some measures in the field of information which would combine the eyecatching with long term effects in opening up new forms of contact. As new proposals, we have in mind the establishment of an annual lecture (alternately in the UK and the USSR) by a distinguished personality, to be broadcast; an exchange of young members of the public service; and more exchanges of TV programmes. The Prime Minister could also use the visit to give impetus to proposals already under discussion for a UK-US-Soviet conference at Ditchley on an economic theme, and for an exchange of British and Soviet weeks. There may be ways in which we can secure better access to Soviet media for British commentators.

If the Prime Minister likes these ideas, we shall need to talk soon to the Russians. This could be an area where a short piece of paper would be useful, to tie them down. I have commented further on the cultural and information aspect in my separate letter about the signature of the Anglo-Soviet cultural exchange programme.

We should certainly also use the time between now and the Prime Minister's visit to argue for an end to the jamming of the BBC Russian service, and for easier access for Soviet citizens to British film shows put on at our Embassy.

It is already very clear that the Russians are looking for tangible "results" in terms of pieces of paper for signature. Sir Geoffrey thinks we should examine such proposals with care, avoiding agreements for the sake of agreements. But we should be open to genuine new

/possibilities



possibilities for cooperation. We already have a satisfactory framework in the 1975 UK Soviet Protocol on Consultations, and useful collaborative programme in energy and agriculture. The Russians have suggested a further intergovernmental agreement in the area of space cooperation, which deserves serious consideration. They have suggested an agreement to update the hotline link, which we are looking at although the cost may prove prohibitive. They have also suggested rail transport and road transport Agreements, which frankly we think do not merit being taken in the context of this visit. I am commenting in a separate letter on the Anglo-Soviet cultural exchange programme, which they have also suggested should be signed during the visit.

The Russians may also propose a joint statement or communique which Sir Geoffrey thinks should be resisted as time wasting and unnecessary. It could also be dangerous.

Sir Geoffrey would welcome the chance to have a word with the Prime Minister about some of these points, and also the programme, on Wednesday 14 January. As to putting the ideas to the Russians, his inclination is to float and negotiate them in the first instance at the Moscow end. It will no doubt be necessary to use Zamyatin at some stage, but for good order the nuts and bolts discussion of the programme should be firmly located in Moscow.

I am sending copies of this to John Howe (Ministry of Defence) Tim Walker (DTI) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Lyn Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

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~~CCP~~
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14 January 1987

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Visit to the Soviet Union:
Anglo-Soviet Cultural Exchange Programme

Negotiations are currently taking place in London to renew our Cultural Exchange Programme with the Soviet Union. The intention has been that it should be signed by Mr Eggar for the Government on Friday 16 January. The leader of the Soviet team has now formally proposed however that the programme should be merely initialled this week, and held up for formal signature during the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. The Soviet Ambassador made the same suggestion when he saw Tim Renton on 8 January.

Our view is that the Cultural Exchange Programme in itself does not merit elevation to the status of a document signed during the Prime Minister's visit. It is a useful but fairly low key document providing for various educational, cultural and scientific exchanges over the next two years. It will not contain any striking new initiatives.

However, signature during the visit would be a way of highlighting, should the Prime Minister wish to do so, her interest in dialogue and exchange with the Soviet Union. The Soviet proposal may also offer us some leverage in securing the agreement of the Russians both to some old demands of ours and to some new proposals for co-operation in the culture/information field.

A further step forward in this field would be very much in the spirit of the government's policy, agreed in 1984, to seek ways of creating better understanding and knowledge of the UK in the Soviet Union. It would also increase the impact of the visit on the public in this country. We need to show that we are ready for dialogue.

I have outlined some of our ideas in my separate letter of about our general thinking on the visit. We see no need to set our sights low: at the same time we would need to be realistic about how far our objectives in this area are likely to be achieved - particularly an end to jamming.

/Against



Against this background, Sir Geoffrey sees advantage in telling the leader of the Soviet delegation this week that we are prepared to initial the Cultural Programme now and to consider subsequently, along with other possible agreements for signature during the Prime Minister's visit, whether it should be signed then. Our delegation would say that the Prime Minister would not think the Cultural Programme on its own of sufficient importance to be signed during her visit. But if some further elements could be agreed (on the lines set out in my separate letter) she might revise this judgement. The delegation would add that she would be more likely to view the proposal favourably if the Russians agree to meet our long-standing concerns on jamming and access to Embassy film performances.

We would not want to make entry into force of the Cultural Programme dependent on Soviet agreement to these demands. But this line would give us maximum leverage now and in the run-up to the visit, while enabling us to keep our options open on the timing and level of signature of the Cultural Programme.

I should be grateful for an early indication of the Prime Minister's views, since we should if possible respond to the Soviet proposal before close of play on 15 January.

longer,

L Parker

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Private Secretary

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