



FILE  
JA

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

28 January 1987

I enclose a copy of a letter from the Director of the Imperial War Museum in which he suggests that the agreement which his Museum has reached with the Soviet Central Armed Forces Museum in Moscow to exchange historic tanks should be implemented during the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. I should be grateful for advice on whether you think this is worth pursuing. As you will see, special arrangements would have to be made for the transport of the tanks which would in effect have to be by a Soviet aircraft.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to John Howe (Ministry of Defence).

(Charles Powell)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

JB



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*From the Private Secretary*

28 January 1987

Thank you for putting on paper so promptly your interesting suggestion that the exchange of tanks with the Soviet Central Armed Forces Museum should be carried out during the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. I will reflect on this and discuss it with one or two others and let you know what we conclude as soon as possible.

(Charles Powell)

Dr. Alan Borg, F.S.A.



ccfe

Imperial War Museum  
Lambeth Road  
London SE1 6HZ  
Telephone 01-735 8922

From the Director  
Dr Alan Borg FSA

ACNB/LSP/IX/196

28 January 1987

Dear Mr Powell

I refer to our telephone conversation of today. This Museum has come to an unique and unusual agreement with the Soviet Central Armed Forces Museum, Moscow to exchange historic tanks. The Russians are giving us an I-S 2 Heavy Tank (the main Soviet tank of the Second World War) and we in exchange are sending them a Conqueror tank. Our vehicle and I suspect theirs will be in running order.

It occurred to me that it might be highly appropriate for this exchange to be made during the Prime Minister's forthcoming visit to Moscow. However, to organise this would require some fairly rapid arrangements for our Conqueror to get to the Soviet Union. Transport would normally be by ship to Leningrad and rail to Moscow, but I am advised that the tank could be flown in a C5A aircraft. Finally, any such arrangement for a hand over in the presence of the Prime Minister would require to be pushed at the diplomatic level since it normally takes at least six months for me to get any reply out of my opposite number, the Director of the Soviet Central Armed Forces Museum.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Borg

Mr Charles Powell  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

