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Prime Minister

CEC



Here are two proposals

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Here:

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Temporarily Retained

(i) that the Princess Royal

should open British Week in Kiev in June 1990

Agree?

3 March 1989

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED IN THE RECORDS
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

(ii) that you might

tell the Russians that

Yes

Dear Charles, you might elect to visit the
over, perhaps meeting Mr. Gorbachev

Agree

British Week in Kiev, 1990: Royal Involvement

CDP
3/3
Yes
not

Preparations are now underway for the "British Week" (it in fact will last rather nearer a month) which is to be held in Kiev in 1990. This will be the second leg of an exchange of British and Soviet weeks, the first leg having been a Soviet Week in Birmingham in October 1988. It will be the most prestigious British event in the Soviet Union for many years. We have been planning on the basis of the British Week taking place in June 1990. However, no date has yet been fixed and the Soviet authorities are now arguing for September (although without making much of a case). June suits us better for a range of practical reasons and above all because we hope the English National Opera Company will (with British Council support) be performing in Kiev from 5 to 11 June. It is essential that the Week should have a prestigious cultural centrepiece and nothing else on this scale is planned for the Soviet Union in 1990.

We believe that one way to clinch the argument in favour of June would be to tell the Russians that a senior member of The Royal Family would be able to open it in June. We had anyway been considering who might open the Week and had concluded that it would give the right sort of message about the importance which we attach to the Week if it were opened by The Princess Royal. We understand that

she would be prepared to open the British Week in Kiev if it took place in June. The Foreign Secretary welcomes the idea. Early agreement on this would allow him to raise the issue of the timing of the Week when he sees Mr Shevardnadze in Vienna on 6 March.

As you know, we have recently been looking at the pattern of Royal visits to the Soviet Union in connection with Prince Edward's planned visit to Moscow in his capacity as Patron of the National Youth Theatre. The Prime Minister agreed that such a visit would be a suitable first step in the gradual escalation in the level of Royal Visits to the Soviet Union. A visit by The Princess Royal to Kiev to open the British Week in 1990 would be an appropriate next stage. Although in protocol terms Prince Edward is senior to The Princess Royal, his visit to the Soviet Union will have a lower profile



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(because he will be there purely in his capacity as Patron of the National Youth Theatre).

In December we had also planned to suggest to the Prime Minister that she might tell Mr Gorbachev that she would like to visit the Kiev event herself and invite him to meet her there. This had no connection with the dates which at that stage were not an issue. If this possibility could be mentioned when the Foreign Secretary meets Mr Shevardnadze, it could both tilt the balance firmly in favour of June, and sow the idea in Mr Gorbachev's mind before he arrives in April.

I am copying this letter to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Jaw.
Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 March 1989

**BRITISH WEEK IN KIEV, 1990:
ROYAL INVOLVEMENT**

Thank you for your letter of 3 March suggesting that we should tell the Russians that a senior member of the Royal Family will be able to open British Week in Kiev in June 1990. The Prime Minister agrees that The Princess Royal should be invited to do this and the Russians so informed.

The Prime Minister would also be ready to tell Mr. Gorbachev that she would like to visit the Kiev event herself and invite him to meet her there.

(C.D. POWELL)

J.S. Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.