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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

15 November 1988

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Dear Stephen,

Temporarily retained Wayland 23/3/17

VISIT OF PRESIDENT GORBACHEV

Thank you for your letter of 15 November with preliminary ideas for the programme for Mr Gorbachev's visit. I have had a quick word with the Prime Minister and you may find it helpful to have her initial comments before we leave for Washington.

The Prime Minister's view on the general outline of the programme is as follows. She and Mr Gorbachev would hold talks on the morning of 13 December at Chequers in the usual very restricted format. These would continue over a working lunch at Chequers. They might be joined for this by Shevardnadze, Yakovlev and Yazov (if he comes) together with the Foreign Secretary and the Defence Secretary: alternatively they might lunch separately in London. Mr Gorbachev would return to London after lunch. We shall need to consider whether there is an engagement he could carry out on the way back, and/or a walkabout. The Prime Minister favours the idea of a Mansion House reception that evening at which Mr Gorbachev could meet a very wide range of City and business people. She thinks the City would expect this, not least because she announced the visit at the Guildhall last night. That would be followed by a dinner at No.10 for the maximum number of people we can accommodate, which is 66. It would have to be without wives, apart from Mrs Gorbachev. The Prime Minister rather doubts whether it would be feasible for Mr Gorbachev to go down to Docklands on the morning of 14 December. But she thinks he ought to lay a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. There might be a opportunity to mingle with people in and around the Abbey just after that. This could be followed by a further session of talks in restricted format at No.10. There might then be a full Guard of Honour ceremony at Buckingham Palace if The Queen approved, Buckingham Palace lunch. The Gorbachevs would depart directly from Buckingham Palace for the airport.

For Mrs Gorbachev, the Prime Minister agrees that there should be a programme with the emphasis on culture, interpreting that broadly to include also something of architectural interest. Other points which the Prime Minister hopes will be considered are a visit to a modern hospital (though we should not commit ourselves to this if nurses' industrial action is still going on), a good school and a college. She also likes the idea of Mrs Gorbachev visiting a new town such as Milton Keynes. A further possibility is a visit to Waddesdon which might be done on the way to or from the working lunch at Chequers on 13 December (which the Prime Minister would expect Mrs Gorbachev to want to attend).

Apart from these broad guidelines, there are a number of subsidiary points:-

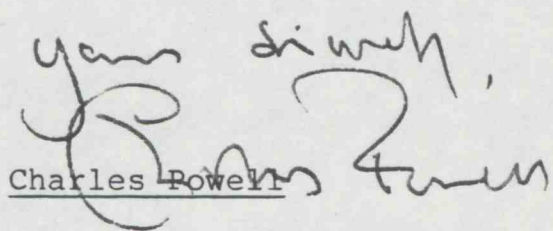
- The Prime Minister does not think it practicable to put up the Gorbachevs at Chequers. There is quite a lot of work going on at present and there are only four operational bedrooms. She thinks that anyway the Gorbachevs would prefer to stay at their own Embassy. We should not therefore propose an overnight at Chequers, although if the Russians were themselves to propose it, you should consult me further.
- The Prime Minister thinks we should have a Guard of Honour with a band and national anthems at Heathrow on arrival, despite the late hour. This need not prejudice the question of a full Guard of Honour ceremony at Buckingham Palace.
- The question of Mr Gorbachev's transport to and from Chequers will obviously need to be discussed with the Russians. It would obviously be very much easier if he were to travel by helicopter from Kensington Gardens and the Prime Minister would hope that The Queen might agree to make available a helicopter from The Queen's Flight. But the Russians have in the past resisted helicopter flights for Mr and Mrs Gorbachev.
- Mr John Sainsbury has already been in touch to suggest that he might show Mrs Gorbachev around a major Sainsbury store or distribution centre. The Prime Minister thinks this would be a good idea.
- We should certainly find time in the programme, either on the late afternoon of 13 December or the morning of 14 December for Mr Gorbachev to receive calls from leaders of the Opposition parties.
- Given that Mrs Gorbachev's programme will be primarily of a cultural/educational nature, the Prime Minister would wish the Secretary of State for Education to escort her throughout. I have discussed this with Mr Baker. He is happy to do so and will make some suggestions for her programme.

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- The Soviet Embassy have suggested that, given the priority which Mr Gorbachev attaches to agriculture, we might try to agree upon some pilot projects in the agricultural, agro-industrial or food technology field during his visit. This would involve British firms helping to set up such projects in the Soviet Union, with associated credit facilities. The Prime Minister thinks this idea well worth pursuing. I should be grateful if you could discuss it with DTI and MAFF.
- The Prime Minister would indeed like gifts around the Christmas tree at Chequers and we have already arranged for Christmas trees to be in place both at Chequers and at No.10 in time for the visit.

This should give you sufficient material to begin discussion of a programme. Please keep me in touch while we are in Washington. The Prime Minister wishes to be very closely associated with the arrangements and to be consulted on any significant points.

I am copying this letter to Sir William Heseltine, to Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence) and to Tom Jeffrey (Department of Education and Science).

*Yours sincerely,*  
  
Charles Powell

Stephen Wall Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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London SW1A 2AH

15 November 1988

Dear Charles

Visit of President Gorbachev

Thank you for your letter of 12 November. Given the restrictions on wider consultations we have not yet been able to produce a detailed draft programme. Inevitably there are a number of questions to which the Russians will have to provide answers. But you may nevertheless like to consider something on the following lines.

On the assumption that the main part of the talks are to be held at Chequers which has considerable security and press handling advantages, the Prime Minister might like to invite the Gorbachevs to stay there at least for the first night. (The Russians have said that they are provisionally planning on the Gorbachevs staying at the Soviet Residence in London). This would make it practical for the entire party to arrive at Brize Norton (given that RAF Northolt's runway is not long enough to take Gorbachev's aircraft) which would give us more control over the arrival arrangements and would avoid too much time being spent on the road (we do not know whether the Russians will permit the Gorbachevs to travel by RAF helicopter). Normally an arriving Head of State, particularly one arriving so late at night, would only have a "carpet guard" and no National Anthems. But last year at Brize Norton he had a more substantial guard and Anthems. We should certainly not wish to do less than that on this occasion. However, The Queen may need to be consulted as to whether She wishes to give a full guard of Honour ceremony (which Gorbachev as Head of State would merit) at Buckingham Palace or at some other stage in the programme. If, not the Prime Minister may wish to offer a guard of Honour in the FCO courtyard.

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Depending on whether the Prime Minister wanted the talks to be held on the same restricted basis as they were at Brize Norton and last year in Moscow, other senior members of the delegation could either also stay at Chequers, in local hotels, or transfer straight to London by road. As usual for such visits we would expect to pay for the official suite which we expect to be approximately 15 or 20. The Russians

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would cover the remainder. *Temporarily retained @ Dayland, 23/3/17*

I assume that the Prime Minister will wish to hold talks for the whole morning on Tuesday 13 December and perhaps continue over a working lunch into the afternoon. One possibility might be for the lunch to be expanded by the inclusion of Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr Shevardnadze and Mr Yakovlev.

We have considered possibilities for engagements on the way from Chequers to London. We have not been able to come up with a detailed recommendation but are thinking on the lines either of a visit to a major retail distributor or manufacturer of high technology goods, or a research institute, or possibly a hospital or school. An alternative could be a direct return to London for a Mansion House Reception (the Guildhall is booked but the Lord Mayor can preside at the Mansion House) or Parliamentary reception. The City do expect to have a role in major visits by important Heads of State and a reception would provide a good opportunity for them to do so without obliging Mr Gorbachev to make a speech.

Depending on whether or not a reception is to be held, the usual calls by Leaders of the Opposition could be fitted in either on the Tuesday evening or the Wednesday morning. The Russians have already said that they would like this included.

I understand that you are considering the possibility of the Prime Minister's dinner being somewhere other than No 10. Despite the size of the party and the need for at least some wives to be invited, the Foreign Secretary believes that the atmosphere of No 10 would contribute to the success of the visit.

On the Wednesday morning we should perhaps include an engagement to give Mr Gorbachev some public exposure as otherwise the visit will have taken place almost entirely behind closed doors or gates. In your letter of 30 October you welcomed the thought of a visit to Docklands. This could perhaps include a short walk-about. Alternatively (I doubt if there would be time for both) we might propose that Mr Gorbachev should lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. We are looking into this. That would allow time for a further session of talks at No 10 Downing Street, after which the Gorbachevs could go straight to Buckingham Palace for a possible guard of Honour followed

It may be that the lunch should end reasonably punctually in order to allow the party to leave for Moscow in good time. This could well involve repositioning the aircraft to Heathrow from Brize

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Norton. Those not involved in the Buckingham Palace lunch could be encouraged to leave earlier.

Mrs Gorbachev would have a separate programme and we are seeking guidance from the Russians as to what she might be interested in doing. Provisional indications are that she is interested in an essentially cultural programme. I should welcome the Prime Minister's views on who she would like to accompany her.

Sir Geoffrey Howe is assuming that for much of 13 December he would be holding talks with Mr Shevardnadze and possibly Mr Yakovlev. The Russians have also told us that they expect either the Soviet Defence Minister or Chief of Staff to be in the party. Separate talks at the Ministry of Defence will therefore be required as well.

We have arranged for Mr Pollock to interpret for the Prime Minister as he has done on the two previous occasions.

I shall be advising on gifts shortly. The meeting will be even closer to Christmas than last year's meeting at Brize Norton. Last time, the Prime Minister arranged for gifts around a Christmas tree at the airport. Would she wish to do something similar at Chequers?

I am copying this letter to Sir William Heseltine and to Brian Hawtin (MOD).

*Yours ever*  
*J S Wall*  
for (J S Wall)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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