



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

14 March 1989

Jean Margaret,

Mr Gorbachev's Visit

Thank you for your letter of 10 March about the inclusion of Celltech of Slough in Mr Gorbachev's programme.

The Soviet Embassy Consellor, Gregori Karasin, visited Celltech at our suggestion at the end of last week. He was very impressed with what he saw, and quite takes the point about the level of technology and the relevance of the company's activities to the Soviet Union and to Anglo-Soviet cooperation. However, he made two points which I think require serious consideration:

- (i) An important element in Mr Gorbachev's request to visit a factory was his desire to talk to representatives of "the British working class", and to be photographed doing so. It is important to Mr Gorbachev particularly at a time when he is coming under heavy criticism at home to be seen maintaining his working class links during his overseas trips. At Celltech most of the staff have degrees if not doctorates, and there is nothing which looks remotely like a production line on which ordinary workers carry out their jobs;
- (ii) Mr Gorbachev is not a microbiologist and would not necessarily therefore be particularly interested in the highly technical and complicated work being done at Celtech. For the media there is nothing which the public either here or in the Soviet Union can instantly recognise by way of production and very little movement or action to make the occasion visually interesting either for the Gorbachevs or for the media. Ideally a factory should be selected where something high-tech but recognisable (computers, information technology, printing, engineering etc) is being produced and where Mr Gorbachev can be seen talking to the workers engaged in the various stages, and then perhaps be photographed with the finished product.

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The Soviet recce party will arrive later this week. By all means let us leave Celltech on their schedule. But Sir Geoffrey Howe believes that we should quickly identify one or two other enterprises in the same area which meet the criteria I have outlined and which might therefore find greater favour with the Soviet team.

I am copying this letter to Charles Powell, Trevor Woolley and John Fairclough.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Gozney

(R H T Gozney)  
Private Secretary

Ms Margaret Bell  
PS/Secretary of State for  
Trade and Industry

SOVIET UNION: VISITS & CONVERSATIONS

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the department for Enterprise

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Your ref

Date 10 March 1989

Dear Richard,

**MR GORBACHEV'S VISIT**

You will be aware that my Department has been asked to recommend a company near to London for inclusion in the programme for Mr Gorbachev's visit to the UK next month.

Conscious of the Prime Minister's wish that a company should be found to the west of London, we should like to recommend the Celltech Group plc at Bath Road, Slough. Celltech is a research-based biotechnology company using molecular biology in the development of pharmaceuticals, particularly antibodies. They employ 450 people at Slough, engaged in both research and manufacturing activities. The company operates in an area which is of importance to the Soviet Union, where they have some experience (the company is a member of the Joint UK/USSR Working Group on the Medical and Biotechnology industry). They have a modern research centre which my Secretary of State opened last year, and regularly receive important visitors. They are well known to John Fairclough.

Officials visited the company today to discuss the possibility of their being included in the programme and to make a visual inspection. They were told of the company's open management policy and techniques in staff relations and motivation, a subject which may well interest Mr Gorbachev. There would be ample opportunity for Mr Gorbachev to have direct access to the work force, many of whom are graduates, and there are several worthwhile opportunities for photographs. There is no production line as such but it is an efficient company which would portray the advanced side of British industry.

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The company is about 30 minutes from London, and could therefore just be accommodated within the two hours available. I understand that, if Celltech is considered to be suitable, your officials would accompany Soviet visitors next week on a further visit to the company.

I am copying this letter to Charles Powell, Trevor Woolley and John Fairclough.

Yours ever  
Margaret Bell

MARGARET BELL  
Private Secretary