

010

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CC/IC~~  
~~CC/ST~~



Prime Minister  
Agree to these  
general objectives  
for Gorbachev's visit?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 November 1984

Agree to small  
preparatory meeting with  
Malcolm Macintosh & other  
outside experts?

Dear Charles,

CD 19/ki

Yes  
mk

Gorbachev's Visit: UK Objectives

We have been giving some thought to our objectives for Gorbachev's visit in December and have identified both specific and general aims. I am writing to you separately about the visit of George Shultz to Chevening which will be taking place just beforehand.

Gorbachev is 53. He is the youngest member of the Politburo but at the moment looks to be the most likely successor to Chernenko as General Secretary of the Party. His comparative youth is, however, a disadvantage and he will have to fight his corner skilfully if he is ultimately to take over. But if he does, he could well be the man who leads the Soviet Union into the 21st Century. The week he spends in the UK may therefore prove a valuable investment in his understanding of the West generally and of the UK in particular.

What we know of Gorbachev from the Canadians and others who have met him is that he is intelligent and confident. To have reached his present position at his age he must also be able, fortunate in his earlier patronage and as tough as the Party's internal system of preference demands. He has been labelled a reformer, mainly on the grounds that he has criticised the manifest failings in the way the Soviet economy functions. But there is nothing to suggest he is not a convinced communist or that he intends (or would be able) to make fundamental alterations to the system itself.

The visit to London as leader of a Parliamentary delegation represents opportunities and risks for Gorbachev. We should bear both in mind. It is an opportunity to visit an important Western nuclear power with worldwide interests and influence and the US's closest ally. Gorbachev will no doubt hope to gain valuable experience of Western views and publicity in Soviet and Western media as playing a prominent role in the Soviet leadership.

The risks are that he might be trapped into an unguarded comment or publicly embarrassed in some way or even that he might be given such publicity in the UK as the Soviet Union's "next leader" that Romanov and other rivals could accuse him

/of

CONFIDENTIAL



of deliberately inflating his position. We should treat him as he is, and not refer publicly to what he might become. We can expect a tough intelligent listener who will note carefully what is said to him but who must be expected to stick to basic Soviet positions on all important points. We should not expect any immediate modifications in Soviet positions.

Against this background, we suggest that our general objectives should be:

- a. to teach him something about how a Western democracy works and what a free market economy can achieve;
- b. to establish personal and political links with Gorbachev on which we can build;
- c. to raise the profile of the UK in Soviet eyes and to show that we have a distinctive view of our own on international questions which is not, as the Russians have a tendency to assume, just a reflection of US policies.

Our specific objectives might be:

- a. to emphasise the sincerity and willingness of the West in general and President Reagan in particular to discuss a wide range of questions with the Soviet Union and to negotiate substantial arms control agreements;
- b. to indicate the areas - nuclear and chemical weapons, outer space systems - where we think progress can and should be made: to explain that the first two years of the second Reagan Administration provide a major opportunity for making progress which should not be missed;
- c. to make full use of the commercial opportunities in pressing particular contracts as well as general areas of industrial and agricultural interest to us during Gorbachev's visits to firms and factories (in a programme which is being co-ordinated by the DTI and which includes calls on Mr Jopling and Mr Channon);
- d. to use the visit to expose the Soviet delegation to a wide range of influential Parliamentary, industrial, press and other leaders, and so to arrange the rest of Gorbachev's programme as to show him a wide cross-section of Britain and British national life;

CONFIDENTIAL



- e. to get an insight into Gorbachev's personality and qualities and through him into current Soviet problems, priorities and intentions.

If the Prime Minister agrees with these objectives, we will make some suggestions about the preparation for and the actual handling of her discussions with Gorbachev. There might, for example, be advantage in a meeting beforehand with two or three experts who could brief on Gorbachev's background and personality. We will also be considering the public relations aspects of his visit. It will attract a great deal of attention and publicity and not be without its potential problems, as the selection of a Donetsk coal-pit foreman as a member of the Supreme Soviet delegation has already made clear. Arthur Scargill's call at the Soviet Embassy on 15 November underlines this point.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (MOD), Steve Nicklen (DTI), Ivor Llewellyn (MAFF), and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

*Len Appleyard*

(L. V. Appleyard)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL