

MJ

11 May 1983

British-Soviet Joint Commission

Thank you for your letter of 10 May, the contents of which the Prime Minister has noted.

AJC

John Rhodes Esq
Department of Trade.

RJR



Prime Minister

To note.

A.D.C. 7/5.

From the Secretary of State

John Coles Esq
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

10 May 1983

Dear John,

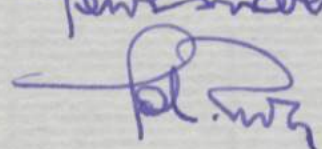
BRITISH-SOVIET JOINT COMMISSION

1 Jonathan Rees (PS/Minister for Trade) wrote to you on 5/ May about the eleventh session of the British-Soviet Joint Commission. This was due to take place in London on 18/19 May under the co-chairmanship of his Minister and Mr Yuri Brezhnev, Soviet First Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade.

2 We have now been informed - before yesterday's General Election announcement - that Mr Brezhnev will not be available. No reason has been given but the Russians have stressed that there are no political implications. The Soviet team will be led by Mr Manzhulo, who is a Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade.

3 In the circumstances, we believe that our team should be led at official level. The occasion is to be strictly business-oriented, with eight senior industrialists on our team. The Commission is considered very important by business: it is very much a commercial rather than a political event. Lord Cockfield does not feel that the General Election need interfere with it and Mr Rees' involvement will be limited to hosting a Dinner and possibly attending a signing ceremony at the end of the Joint Commission's proceedings. While it would not be sensible to try to conceal that the Joint Commission was taking place, there would be no need to give it any particular publicity.

4 Copies go as before to the Private Secretaries to members of OD and to the Private Secretaries to the Secretary of State for Industry and the Minister for Agriculture.

Yours sincerely,


JOHN RHODES
Private Secretary

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