

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO MOSCOW

Your visit to Moscow will be an event of major international importance. It could also have a considerable impact at home.

Gorbachev has invited you, despite the harsh things you say about the Soviet communist system, because he recognises that you are the strongest western leader, with a determining voice in western policy. He is not going to reach any sort of agreement with the West unless it has your concurrence, as the Camp David conclusions will have confirmed. We know that the Soviet Embassy are reporting that you will win the next election, so the Russians will calculate that they will have to deal with you for the foreseeable future. There is also an element of default. President Reagan is in balk and may have entered terminal political decline. Chancellor Kohl is in disgrace for his Goebbels comment. The Russians are presumably as perplexed as everyone else whether Mitterrand or Chirac is the one to concentrate on in France.

This creates opportunities, but also expectations which will be hard to meet. On the plus side, you haven't made any concessions to get to Moscow: far from it, you have been the main obstacle to Soviet ambitions and ploys. (There is incidentally a stark contrast here with the fevered efforts of Churchill and Eden to cadge high level meetings with the post-Stalin Soviet leadership in the early 1950s, which led them to shy away from direct criticism of the Russians.) Gorbachev has first hand experience of your style and views and is unlikely to waste time trying to create divisions between you and the United States. The conditions are there for serious work to be done. Gorbachev will have some incentive, though not to be exaggerated, to mark the visit with progress in one area or another. On the domestic side, it will be an opportunity to demonstrate that behind the shield of a strong defence, you are engaged in serious negotiation with the Soviet leadership on ways to reduce

international tensions and limit or reduce nuclear weapons - without having to compromise your Iron Lady views about Soviet communism.

But there will be considerable difficulties in giving substance to the visit. There is no real scope for you to act as an intermediary between the Russians and Americans in an active negotiating sense. You have always made clear that you do not stand somewhere between the US and the Soviet Union but firmly at the side of the US. And when it comes down to it, the Americans and Russians will only be satisfied with direct negotiation on the major issues of arms control. The same probably applies on the main regional issues. The Russians will want to deal direct with the Americans or not at all. This need not inhibit you from urging Gorbachev to move towards the arms control priorities set out in the Camp David statement. But it will greatly limit the scope for actual negotiation during a visit on any save bilateral issues (which are not of great moment), although it is just possible that in one or two specialised areas such as chemical weapons there could be progress.

The conclusion which I draw is that realistic objectives for the visit are to strengthen your working relationship with Mr. Gorbachev, to enlarge your knowledge and understanding of his intentions, to act as the principal interpreter of these to the western allies in what looks likely to be a period of only limited US/Soviet direct contact, to maintain your reputation for standing up to the Soviet Union on issues such as human rights and to continue to play your present leading role in determining how the West deals with Gorbachev's Russia. The main trap to avoid will be attempts by Gorbachev to manoeuvre you into appearing to be hysterically anti-Soviet and the main obstacle to progress towards 'desirable' goals on arms control and detente.

There are certain conclusions to be drawn from all this for the presentation of and programme for your visit and the handling of your talks with Gorbachev.

On presentation, we should play down advance expectations from your visit. We do not want to risk it looking or being made to look a failure, if there are no concrete agreements (and there probably won't be). But we should also make the visit itself very high profile, particularly pictorially and in terms of events in the programme, so that there is plenty of visible evidence of the relationship which you enjoy with Gorbachev and the high-level treatment which the Soviet Union intend to give your visit. (Bernard would like the engagements to be spread in a way which will allow plenty of photo-opportunities each day.)

In terms of programme, we might aim for one or two unusual aspects which will attract attention and demonstrate your concern in particular for basic human rights. For instance, we might try to arrange a meeting with the Sakharovs (I would not discount the possibility that the Russians would agree); and you might go out early on the Sunday so that you could attend an Orthodox service at Zagorsk (which would be a sign of hope and encouragement to Christians in the Soviet Union). We should try for a walkabout, preferably somewhere outside Moscow, and an opportunity to visit a Russian family in their home (though I fear that this is likely to prove a Government Inspector exercise). We should propose that you should be interviewed for Soviet television. We might also aim for something unusual in the programme that no other western leader has done like visit the main Soviet space complex. I do not know whether Mr. Gorbachev has a dacha where he might take you, or even possibly to his home (which would be very unusual).

As regards the handling of your talks, I think that we should go for you to have the maximum possible time alone with Gorbachev with discussions focussing on broad philosophical and political issues, including his plans for the Soviet Union and the management of its economy, before moving on to regional issues, human rights and arms control, with this last not allowed to overshadow the rest.

Lastly we should not present the visit as a one-off event but as part of a continuing process. It may be, for instance, that there will be enough substance from the visit to warrant an early meeting with President Reagan; or an offer to brief your NATO colleagues collectively, or at least commission the Foreign Secretary to do so on your behalf.

These are some first thoughts. If you agree, I would like to use them to give the FCO a steer.

Sir Percy Cradock generally agrees. I attach a note by him commenting on the above.

C.P.P.

Charles Powell

6 January 1987

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 January, 1987.

Dear Colin,

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

I promised to let you have some guidance on the Prime Minister's views about her visit to Moscow.

The Prime Minister sees the visit as of considerable importance in both international and domestic terms, but also recognises the difficulties in giving it substance. The Russians and the Americans will be satisfied only with direct negotiation with each other on the major arms control and regional issues. On arms control, Gorbachev will seek to reimpose the Reykjavik framework, seeing the Prime Minister as its main opponent. The Prime Minister will wish to reaffirm the Camp David framework as that within which progress now has to be made. The meeting could be an opportunity to pass messages to Washington, but any meeting of minds or agreement is most unlikely. There will be no scope for us to play an intermediary role, nor indeed would it be desirable since we are not in the middle but firmly on one side. All this means that there will be little opportunity for negotiation during the visit except on bilateral issues (which are not of great moment), although it is just possible that there will be scope for making progress in one or two specialised areas such as chemical weapons.

The conclusion has to be that we should not set our sights too high on substance. Realistic objectives for the visit are to strengthen the Prime Minister's working relationship with Mr. Gorbachev, to enlarge our knowledge and understanding of his intentions, to strengthen our claim to act as the principal interpreter of these to the western allies in what looks likely to be a period of only limited US/Soviet direct contact, to maintain the Government's reputation for standing up to the Soviet Union on issues such as human rights and to continue to play our present leading role in determining how the West deals with Gorbachev's Russia. The main trap to avoid will be attempts by Gorbachev to manoeuvre the Prime Minister into appearing to be

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hysterically anti-Soviet and the main obstacle to progress towards 'desirable' goals on arms control and detente.

There are also conclusions to be drawn for the presentation of a programme for the visit and the handling of the talks with Gorbachev.

On presentation, we should play down advance expectations from the visit. We do not want to risk it looking or being made to look a failure, if there are no concrete agreements (and there probably won't be). But we should make the visit itself very high profile, particularly pictorially and in terms of events in the programme, so that there is plenty of visible evidence of the relationship which the Prime Minister enjoys with Gorbachev, and opportunities to demonstrate that the Government's firmness on defence does not preclude serious negotiations for reduced tensions or reduced armaments. Engagements will need to be spread in a way which will allow plenty of photo-opportunities each day.

In terms of programme, we should aim for one or two unusual aspects which will attract attention and demonstrate the Prime Minister's concern in particular for basic human rights. For instance, we might try to arrange a meeting with the Sakharovs, and the Prime Minister might go out early on Sunday, 29 March, to attend an Orthodox service at Zagorsk, which would be a sign of hope and encouragement to Christians in the Soviet Union. We should try for a walkabout, preferably somewhere outside Moscow, and an opportunity to visit a Russian family in their home (though this would probably prove to be a Government Inspector exercise). We should propose that the Prime Minister should be interviewed for Soviet television. We might also aim for something unusual in the programme that no other western leader has done, like visit the main Soviet space complex. I do not know whether Mr. Gorbachev has a dacha where he might take the Prime Minister, or even possibly to his home (I realise that this would be very unlikely).

As regards the handling of the talks, the Prime Minister would want to have the maximum possible time with Gorbachev in a very restricted session, with discussions focussing on broad philosophical and political issues, including his plans for the Soviet Union and the management of its economy, before moving on to the world situation, human rights and arms control, with this last not allowed to overshadow the rest.

None of this is meant to pre-empt further suggestions or advice from the Embassy and the Office. And I realise that some of the programme suggestions may be difficult for the Russians to swallow, although I should underline that the Prime Minister is particularly attached to the proposed meeting with the Sakharovs, the visit to Zagorsk (perhaps outside the formal programme), a walkabout and a TV interview.

It would be helpful to have your advice on how best to pursue these programme suggestions with the Russians. I see

something to be said for involving Zamyatin. He has been active in encouraging the visit, has an obvious stake in its success, and as a former spokesman may be sympathetic to the public relations aspects of it. It might for instance be helpful to call him into No.10 to go over the Prime Minister's ideas.

Yours sincerely,
C.D. Powell

C.D. Powell

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

MR. POWELL

6 January 1987

c Mr Ingham

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

1. Your minute of 6 January.
2. I agree generally. The invitation is a tribute to the Prime Minister and a recognition of her primacy among Western European leaders. Its importance is enhanced by Reagan's difficulties. It offers unusual opportunities in the international and domestic context.
3. We need to form a view of what Gorbachev will want from it. He will have no illusions about the Prime Minister's views or firmness. But he is an activist. He is faced with the awkward problem of how to handle the United States during a long period, almost two years, in which it is headed by a weakened President. Should he wait for the successor or should he push on for agreements? He came near a major coup at Reykjavik and the signs are that he will try to get back to the Reykjavik framework and build on it. Failing that, he will wish to extract the maximum propaganda benefits from the Soviet Reykjavik position (all these good things would be available if only the United States were to modify their stand on SDI). It is conceivable that he will offer concessions over SDI in order to tempt Reagan and break the deadlock. It is unlikely at present that without further moves on SDI he will abandon linkage and offer a separate agreement, say on chemical weapons or on LR INF.
4. In his talks with the Prime Minister he will therefore seek to reimpose the Reykjavik framework, rightly seeing her as its main opponent; and if he fails he will want to blame

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her. She will wish to reaffirm the Camp David framework as that within which any progress has now to be made, and this should be one of our main private objectives. The meeting could be an opportunity for messages intended for Washington, but any meeting of minds or agreement is most unlikely. In the end I agree the Russians will want to deal directly with the Americans or not at all.

5. On substance, we should not therefore set our sights too high. Presentationally, however, the visit should be high profile. It should be used to demonstrate the leading position enjoyed by the Prime Minister as Western interlocutor of the Russians and the fact that firmness on defence does not preclude serious negotiations for reduced tensions or reduced armaments; indeed, the two go together. Like you, therefore, I favour a long session alone with Gorbachev in discussion of the Soviet Union's policies and future and the world situation. I agree we do not want to concentrate exclusively on arms control, but in order to forestall Russian and left-wing criticism we need to be able to show that within the Camp David framework the Prime Minister is proposing major arms reductions.

6. The Prime Minister might be shown these minutes, following which we might have a short meeting with her.



PERCY CRADOCK

SIR PERCY CRADOCK) separate copies
MR. INGHAM)

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

I attach a draft of the sort of note which I would like to put to the Prime Minister shortly, as a first step in planning her visit to Moscow. I should be very grateful for any comments and suggestions during the day.

CDP

CHARLES POWELL
6 January 1987

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international tensions and limit or reduce nuclear weapons - without having to compromise your Iron Lady views about Soviet communism.

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In terms of programme, we might aim for one or two unusual aspects which will attract attention and demonstrate your concern in particular for basic human rights. For instance, we might try to arrange a meeting with the Sakharovs (I would not discount the possibility that the Russians would agree); and you might go out early on the Sunday so that you could attend an Orthodox service at Zagorsk (which would be a sign of hope and encouragement to Christians in the Soviet Union). We should try for a walkabout, preferably somewhere outside Moscow. We might propose that you should be interviewed for Soviet television. We might also aim for something unusual in the programme that no other western leader has done like visit the main Soviet space complex. I do not know whether Mr. Gorbachev has a dacha where he might take you, or even possibly to his home (which would be very unusual).

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CHARLES POWELL

January 1987