

PRIME MINISTER

## MR. GORBACHEV'S VISIT

Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy came into see me this morning to bring me up to date about Mr. Gorbachev's visit.

According to Kossov, the problem lies in untying the knot between his visit here and his visit to Cuba. Castro is being very difficult and sticking out for an early visit. A member of the Politburo, Vorotnikov, had gone to Cuba today to try to persuade Castro that the visit must be abandoned for now and dealt with at a later date. Until this problem was resolved, Mr. Gorbachev would be unable to make a formal proposal for dates for his visit here. But the Soviet Ambassador had this morning addressed a personal cable to him urging that a decision be reached by the end of this week and he hoped very much that would be the case. Kossov added that he was still fairly sure that a visit would be suggested for the latter part of this month, possibly 22/24 January.

I have informed the Palace of this.

C.D.P.

mt

(C.D. POWELL)

3 January 1989

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P.S. Kossov has subsequently telephoned to say that the Soviet Ambassador has been summoned back at short notice for a Central Committee Plenum in Moscow next week. It is unexpected & connected with the elections in Nov. C.D.P.