



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

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From the Private Secretary

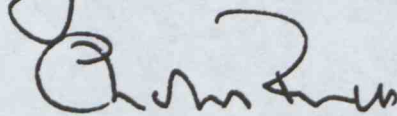
Dear Richard.

MR. GORBACHEV'S INTERVIEW WITH THE TIMES

Thank you for your letter of 17 March about the Prime Minister's interview with Izvestia and Mr. Gorbachev's interview with the Times.

I have spoken again to Kossov, saying that I was making arrangements for the Prime Minister's programme next week and wondered whether he was yet able to give me information about the Times interview which would enable me to confirm the appointment with Izvestia on 22 March. Mr. Kossov said that he had not yet had any response from Moscow on this specific point although our views had been reported. He thought it very likely that Mr. Gorbachev would do an interview with the British press before he came to London or perhaps while he was in London. He might even do something for television. But he could not yet give me an assurance on this point. I said that I assumed that Mr. Laptev would not be setting out from Moscow until the situation was clarified. Mr. Kossov said that he would try to get back to me during the weekend. He asked whether we had had any reaction in Moscow. I said that I was not aware of any.

I think it would be in order for our Embassy in Moscow to speak on similar lines but without ever categorically saying that the Prime Minister will not grant an interview to Izvestia. I suspect that, at the end of the day, she might not be entirely unsympathetic to Mr. Gorbachev's point of view.

Yours sincerely,


CHARLES POWELL

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