

191743Z

COMMENT

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CONFIDENTIAL  
FM FCO  
TO DESKBY 200600Z MOSCOW  
TELNO 381  
OF 181640Z MARCH 89

FROM RESIDENT CLERK

YOUR TELNO 475: GORBACHEV INTERVIEW WITH THE TIMES

1. KOSSOV (SOVIET EMBASSY) TELEPHONED POWELL (NO 10) ABOUT THIS ON 18 MARCH. KOSSOV SAID IT HAD NOT (NOT) BEEN POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE GORBACHEV TO REINSTATE THE TIMES INTERVIEW. GORBACHEV AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD EACH AGREED TO UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS VISIT BY GIVING AN INTERVIEW TO A MAJOR NEWSPAPER. SUBSEQUENTLY, AND AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S URGING, HE HAD AGREED TO GIVE A PUBLIC SPEECH IN LONDON. THIS OBIATED THE NEED FOR A SEPARATE INTERVIEW. HE WAS PREPARED TO GIVE SHORT SNATCHES OF INTERVIEWS TO THE PRESS AND TV, BUT THAT WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE IN DEPTH INTERVIEW ENVISAGED FOR THE TIMES. WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WENT AHEAD WITH HER IZVESTIA INTERVIEW WAS A MATTER FOR HER. BUT IF IT WAS NO LONGER CONVENIENT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO SEE IZVESTIA THAT WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD. KOSSOV ADDED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED THE RESPONSE DIRECT FROM CHERNAYEV (IN GORBACHEV'S OFFICE) AND IT WAS ENDORSED BY FALIN.

2. POWELL SAID THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED. THERE HAD BEEN A CLEAR AGREEMENT THAT BOTH SHE AND GORBACHEV WOULD GIVE INTERVIEWS. EQUALLY SHE MUCH APPRECIATED GORBACHEV'S DECISION TO MAKE A MAJOR SPEECH IN LONDON. HE WOULD CONFIRM LATER WHETHER OR NOT SHE WAS STILL PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE IZVESTIA INTERVIEW.

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LIMITED  
SOVIET DEPT  
PS  
PS/MRS CHALKER  
RESIDENT CLERK  
[BARLOW]

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