

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

The Soviet Ambassador is coming to see you on Tuesday for a discussion of your visit to the Soviet Union. There are a number of points which you will want to discuss with him.

General

You will want to stress to the Ambassador that, contrary to some press reports, you do not see this visit in any way in terms of domestic politics in this country. We have deliberately tried to counter attempts by the press to raise unrealistic expectations about it.

Nonetheless, you see it as a very important event, and above all as an opportunity to continue your dialogue with Mr. Gorbachev. You are going to particular lengths to prepare yourself thoroughly for the visit. You would like it to contribute in practical ways to progress in East/West relations. You recognise that many of the issues concerned require multilateral agreement, or are for direct negotiation between the Soviet Union and the United States. But you do not rule out reaching specific agreements on some points. You will approach your talks with Mr. Gorbachev with an open mind on this possibility.

The Programme

We gave the Russians our proposals some time ago but have had virtually no response so far. You will want to chivvy the Ambassador a bit on this, in the hope that he can extract some progress from Moscow.

You will recall that our main requests are: two very restricted meetings with Gorbachev (with separate meetings between Foreign Ministers); a meeting with Mr. Ryzhkov; a walk about in Moscow; a visit to the Institute of

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Crystallography; signature of some bilateral agreements; an interview on television; a visit outside Moscow, probably to Tibilisi. You should not mention to the Ambassador the proposed meetings with the Sakharovs and with Jewish refuseniks.

We have been trying for two weeks to send Mike Horne and Mike Waller on a reconnaissance visit to set up arrangements. Each time the Russians have cancelled their visit at the last moment. It would help if you would press the Soviet Ambassador to ensure that they are allowed to go not later than next weekend.

It would also help if you could say to the Ambassador that you would find it very convenient if the Soviet authorities could agree to our using our own aircraft to travel from Moscow to Tibilisi on the last day of the visit (assuming that is when we visit Tibilisi) so that you can fly direct from there back to London. You could recall that we allowed Mr. Gorbachev to travel in a Soviet aircraft from London to Edinburgh and thence to Moscow.

Substance

We shall have had a discussion of this on Tuesday morning and you will no doubt want to take your line from that. The main issues will be arms control, regional problems (Middle East, Afghanistan, Southern Africa), bilateral issues including trade and human rights.

The Soviet Ambassador is likely to revert to the theme of giving political substance to the visit. He may suggest that this points to some sort of agreed communique or a statement dealing with arms control (on the lines of your Camp David statements). You will want to say that you would not want to be firmly committed to such a statement in advance. You would much prefer to hold your talks first and decide in the light of these whether there is sufficient common ground to justify

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an agreed statement. Your mind is not closed to this and indeed it could be very useful as a means for both sides to mark the success of the visit. But you do not believe in doing things for form's sake. It is only worthwhile if a statement marks a real step forward.

Human Rights

You could say to the Ambassador that it would be your intention to follow your usual practice of raising these issues privately and in a very low key. You might go on to suggest to him, on a very personal basis, that it will improve the atmosphere of the visit very considerably if at least some cases with which the United Kingdom or you personally have been directly involved could be settled before you go to Moscow. This would apply to a number of family reunifications cases. Another example would be Ida Nudel with which you have had a special connection. You are making this suggestion to the Ambassador alone without telling anyone else. You will not again refer to it.

Bilateral

Particular points which you will want to stress are that you want to see the visit further Anglo-Soviet trade. We believe that there are a number of contracts which could be signed before, or during the visit. There are other bilateral agreements under discussion. We attach particular importance to a Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in Information and Culture.

CDP

CHARLES POWELL

6 March 1987