

file 213

(cc: Foreign)
Yeltsin.doc



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

2 February 1990

VISIT OF MR YELTSIN

Thank you for your letter about Mr Yeltsin. I think the Prime Minister's preference would be to find a way of not seeing him at what is clearly a very difficult time for Mr Gorbachev, but this would not extend to a direct rebuff. For the time being, I propose to pursue a policy of masterly inactivity and simply not reply to Mr Nurnberg's letter asking whether the Prime Minister would wish to see him.

C. D. POWELL

Richard Gozney, Esq.
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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PRIME MINISTER

VISIT OF MR YELTSIN

Mr Yeltsin may visit London in mid-March to coincide with the publication of his book. We have been asked whether you would see him. He does not have any official position and a meeting with him would probably irritate Mr Gorbachev. He has some curiosity value: when he went to Washington last year, President Bush saw him very briefly in a rather clumsily engineered "accidental" meeting. My own view is it would not be right for you to see him, given your particular close personal relationship with Mr Gorbachev. I would therefore propose to fend off requests.

Agree ^{not} to see him?

If we can find him

CDP

off nicely
not

Charles Powell
1 February 1990

c: Yeltsin (MJ)

GR App. NURNBERG

cc/c



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 February 1990

pps attached

Jean Charles,

Request for Call on the Prime Minister by Mr Yeltsin

Thank you for your letter of 12 January about the suggestion that the Prime Minister might like to see Boris Yeltsin in March.

Yeltsin remains a controversial figure in Soviet politics. A former member of the Politburo and Moscow City Party boss, he was demoted in 1987, reportedly after complaining about Party privilege and the slow pace of reform. He did not leave the political scene. In the election last spring he stood in the main Moscow constituency and overwhelmingly defeated the official Party candidate. Since then he has continued to attack the failure of perestroika to get to grips with the country's underlying problems. He has toured both the US and Japan, gaining widespread international publicity for his colourful remarks.

Yelstin has been received by other foreign leaders including President Bush (at a highly staged "chance" meeting at the White House). He has a certain curiosity value, and he could in future rebuild his position with support from a populist/nationalist faction with roots in the Russian working class. He does not however have any official position which would justify a call on the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary does not recommend that the Prime Minister should offer a meeting unless she is particularly curious to meet him. There might at this precarious stage in Soviet affairs be a good deal of speculation about the purpose of the call.

Yours ever,

Richard Gozney

(R H T Gozney)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street