



TPM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

PRIME MINISTER

GORBACHEV

I don't know if you intend to make any sort of speech at lunch, but I attach some notes which might serve as a basis.

I'm not sure jokes will be appropriate. But in one of his letters to Engels (written in May 1868) Marx recalled that his mother once said: "If only Karl had made Capital ... instead of just writing about it".

C.D.R.



PRIME MINISTER'S LUNCH FOR MR. GORBACHEV AT CHEQUERS ON  
SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER

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SPEAKING NOTE FOR LUNCHTIME REMARKS

Warmly welcome Mr. and Mrs. Gorbachev and those accompanying them today to UK and to Chequers.

Sir Geoffrey Howe will formally and publicly welcome you on behalf of the Government tomorrow. For today, in this private forum, would like to make some more informal remarks.

Looking forward greatly to opportunity to have more detailed and thorough discussion with representatives of Soviet leadership than brief visit to Moscow in February allowed.



Glad it has been possible to arrange our meeting so soon after your arrival - before you make your mind up! Chance for me to steer you in the right direction.

You told our Ambassador the week before last you wanted to dispense with diplomatic formalities and get straight down to business. Share this view completely. Hope we can get down to some brass tacks.

Gone through a period when East/West relations poor. Things have not worked out as the optimists hoped in the 1970s. Instead of diminished tension, reduced levels of arms, constructive co-operation we have seen increase in



tension, no progress on arms control and the minimum of working together over the last few years.

Many reasons for this. Would not be honest of me if I did not say that certain Soviet actions have been among them. Not the moment for retrospection, but try to learn from the past and create a more stable future.

I decided Britain should do everything it could to try to move things back to more constructive path; embark on slow and painful business of rebuilding trust and confidence. No illusions that anything but long process requiring patience and persistence.



But how? First and most important, get to know each other. The confidence that comes from familiar faces, points of view fully understood if not necessarily agreed with. This means more contacts at all levels. Straightforward talking needed in all circumstances.

Personal experience important. See that wide-ranging programme has been arranged. Will enable you to see a real slice of British life.

Particularly glad that your wife could accompany you. Hope she will enjoy her programme. Her presence will add a special dimension to your visit.



Glad that you will be seeing something of our agriculture as well as industry. Could hardly be greater contrast between your homeland of northern Caucasus and Britain. You have rolling prairies; much of Britain still quite small fields bounded by hedgerows. As a result of scale on which we have to operate much ingenuity has gone into maximising production per acre, use of mechanisation.

Here and in other fields, scope for exploring whether there are things we can usefully learn from each other.

/ William



William Shakespeare, who knew most things, also knew of the Caucasus and in his Richard II wrote:

"O who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?"

What he meant was that images are not enough, we must have reality. That is what we need and our peoples want in our relations: reality and substance not stereotypes and outdated images of each other. Let us start on that process today.