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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 March, 1985.

Death of President Chernenko

Thank you for your letter of 11 March about President Chernenko's death.

The Prime Minister has approved the draft message from her to Mr. Tikhonov, which may now be despatched. She is content for the Foreign Secretary to advise the Palace that The Queen should send a message to the Acting Head of State.

The Prime Minister proposes to attend the funeral, and agrees that the Foreign Secretary should accompany her. We shall not, however, announce this publicly until there is some general indication from Moscow that Heads of Government are invited. I should be grateful if you would let me know as soon as possible when this happens, as we are under considerable pressure from the Press.

The Prime Minister would be grateful if the Foreign Secretary would sign the condolence book at the Soviet Embassy.

The Prime Minister has invited representatives of Opposition Parties to join the delegation. We understand that Mr. Kinnock, Mr. Steel and Dr. Owen will do so. Mr. Kinnock will be accompanied by Mr. Charles Clarke.

Administrative Arrangements

The Prime Minister will be accompanied from No.10 by me, Andrew Turnbull, Bernard Ingham, Miss Susan Chappell (Duty Clerk), Mrs. Stephanie Harris (Personal Secretary), Det. Superintendent Ray Parker, and Det. Inspector Roger Watson. We discussed the composition of the FCO delegation.

The Prime Minister will attend Questions in the House tomorrow, and will leave immediately after them by helicopter from Wellington Barracks. This would enable her to leave Heathrow at 1600. The Prime Minister would wish to dine on the aircraft. On arrival in Moscow she would welcome a short briefing meeting. Her departure time on

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13 March will depend on the time of her meeting with the new General Secretary.

We are offering places on the helicopter to Mr. Kinnock, Mr. Steel and Dr. Owen. Other passengers, apart from the Prime Minister, will be me, Andrew Turnbull, and a detective.

As regards accommodation in Moscow, the Prime Minister would wish as many as possible of me, Andrew Turnbull, Miss Chappell, Bernard Ingham, and Mrs. Harris to be with her in the Residence in that order.

The Prime Minister's highest priority in Moscow will be a meeting with the new General Secretary. This must be on 13 March because of her heavy commitments in London on 14 March. I should be grateful if the Embassy could press hard for this. Assuming it is Mr. Gorbachev, the Prime Minister would wish to be accompanied (as at Chequers) by the Foreign Secretary and me.

The question of bilaterals with other Heads of Government attending the funeral will need to wait until we have further news of who will be there and what time is available.

I assume that your Protocol Department will approach the Opposition Leaders' Offices to obtain passports etc.

Charles Powell

Len Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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