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CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO POLAND

The Poles have now made a formal request for a short postponement of your visit. I attach the telegram reporting this. As you will see, they want to find new dates within less than a month.

I attach the relevant pages of your forward diary. I am sure you will want to go to Poland not later than 3/4 November because you then run into the State Visit here, preparations for the Lord Mayor's Banquet and a visit to Washington. This suggests that the only practicable week is that beginning Sunday 30 October. Questions will have started by then but I do not think missing one day will matter. The alternatives seem to me:

- to go over to Poland on the evening of Sunday 30 October carrying out a programme on Monday 31 October and Tuesday 1 November exactly along the lines planned for Monday 17/Tuesday 18 October. We would have to find alternative dates for the General Reception and for the Reception for the Wightman Cup but invitations have not yet gone out to either of these. Otherwise there are no meetings which could not be re-scheduled;
- to go over on the evening of Wednesday 2 November carrying out the programme on Thursday 3/Friday 4 November. This would be possible and the Friday in particular is very light on engagements at present but going on the Thursday would mean bringing Cabinet forward to the Wednesday and changing two other important Cabinet Committees. This would not be impossible but I think it is very much second choice.

Would you agree to our putting the first of these alternatives to the Poles with the second as fall-back?

Charles Powell
29 September 1988
cc: Mr. Ingham

Yes Mr