

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

27 October 1988

From the Private Secretary

SUBJECT : CC MASTER

Dear Sir,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE POLISH AMBASSADOR

The Prime Minister had a brief meeting this evening with the Polish Ambassador to discuss her forthcoming visit to Poland. Dr. Gertych was accompanied by one of the Embassy Counsellors.

The Prime Minister said she was looking forward to the visit. Poland had a special place for Britain and events there were followed closely by our people. She was very grateful to General Jaruzelski and Mr. Rakowski for the arrangements made for the programme. Her highest priority was to meet as many people as possible and she hoped there would be plenty of opportunity for that.

The Ambassador then read a long prepared statement interspersed with some of his characteristically rambling reminiscences. The Prime Minister's visit was an historic one. Great importance was attached to it at the very highest levels in Poland. The preparations for the visit had been successfully concluded. The Polish side's ambition was to ensure that the Prime Minister achieved a first-hand, comprehensive and realistic insight into developments in Poland, and learn the intentions of the Polish authorities. There was a long tradition of relations, co-operation and friendship between Britain and Poland. The Polish side hoped that the visit would make a significant contribution to bilateral relations. They saw further possibilities in terms of economic co-operation, cultural and scientific contacts and exchanges of people. There was already enormous interest in the visit among the Polish people which augured well. His authorities believed that both sides would gain if the visit had a constructive, and not an antagonistic, outcome. The Polish people esteemed wise, respected and patriotically-minded people. They would welcome the Prime Minister as the personification of these qualities. They recognised that no-one outside Poland could solve their problems. But they hoped the Prime Minister would be ready to discuss how outside countries could help Poland to solve them. Their ambition was that the visit should leave a lasting impression.

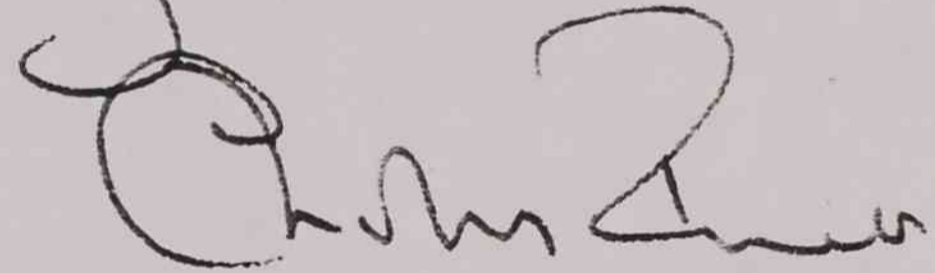
The Prime Minister said that she was equally anxious for the visit to be a success. She would wish to discuss broader East/West issues as well as internal developments in

SLB

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Poland. She understood that the opening of round-table discussions between Government and opposition was now likely to be postponed until after her visit. She believed that such discussions could be useful provided they got down to concrete issues and were not just an excuse for avoiding decisions. The Ambassador launched into a long and largely unintelligible historical account of the origins of the present situation. The Prime Minister must be aware that there were many opposition groups in Poland, not just Solidarity, and all of them should be involved in discussions about the future. Solidarity was basically a trade union organisation and should not be regarded as a political party: politics had no place on the factory floor. The real trouble with Solidarity and the other opposition groups was that they preferred opposition to constructive participation in government. The Ambassador added that he expected General Jaruzelski would want to tell the Prime Minister something about future constitutional developments in Poland including the introduction of a French-style Presidency.

your sincerely,


CHARLES POWELL

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.