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## PRIME MINISTER

## MEETING WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

You are to see the Soviet Ambassador at 1030 on Monday, so that he can report to you on the recent CPSU Party Conference and on any contacts which he had with Mr. Gorbachev while in Moscow.

You have of course followed the proceedings of the Conference very closely. You will want, therefore, to head Zamyatin off from giving a blow by blow account and try to get him instead to give you his impression of the way ahead.

Points which you might make are:

- you are grateful to him for getting you a full translation of Mr. Gorbachev's speech so rapidly;
- the lively and outspoken debate at the Party Conference was impressive;
- nonetheless our impression is that Mr. Gorbachev was well out in front of the majority of delegates and pulling a rather reluctant party behind him. Does Ligachev represent a focus for opposition to Gorbachev's policies?
- the time-scale for implementing political and economic reforms set out by Mr. Gorbachev is ambitious. Is it realistic?
- what will be the fate of the proposal to establish an executive Presidency by combining the role of General Secretary and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet?
- what will be the task of the Central Committee Plenum at the end of July?
- how does he expect nationalities' problems to be handled?

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Other points which you might raise are:

- is there further news of the likely timing of Mr. Gorbachev's visit to the United Kingdom? It is important to maintain the continuity of contacts;
- we are looking forward to a visit from an IPU Delegation from the Soviet Union later in the year. Is there any firm news yet who will lead this? (Some rumours have it that Ligachev will: that would be interesting to say the least);
- you very much hope that Mr. Gorbachev will find time to see Bryan Cartledge before he leaves Moscow in mid-August on retirement. It would be a good opportunity for Gorbachev to set out his views on the way ahead (as well as going some way to balance the access which you give Zamyatin).

C.D.P?

(C. D. POWELL)

8 July 1988