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SUBJECT CO MASTER



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 July 1988

Dear Mr.

**PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR:
AFGHANISTAN**

At the end of his meeting with the Prime Minister this morning the Soviet Ambassador said that he had been charged by Mr. Gorbachev to convey an unofficial request to the Prime Minister. Some 300 Soviet officers and men had been taken prisoner by the Resistance in Afghanistan. The majority of them were held in Pakistan. Mr. Gorbachev attached very high priority to securing their release. He received a great volume of correspondence from their families on the subject. He would be very grateful for any help which the Prime Minister could give in terms of using her good offices to bring about their early release. The Prime Minister said that she would pursue the matter and consider how she could help.

The Prime Minister would be grateful for the Foreign Secretary's advice on whether and how we should pursue this. I should add that her personal inclination is that we should help.

I am copying this letter to Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence).

Yours sincerely,

(C. D. POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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