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CONFIDENTIAL  
DEDIP/PERSONAL  
FM CABINET OFFICE LONDON  
TO DESKBY 220800Z MOSCOW  
TELNO MISC 085  
OF 211900Z FEBRUARY 90

PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR  
FROM CHARLES POWELL, 10 DOWNING STREET.

I AM UNDER SOME PRESSURE FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF BORIS YELTSIN'S BOOK IN THIS COUNTRY TO SAY WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WILL SEE HIM WHILE HE IS HERE IN THE WEEK BEGINNING 12 MARCH.

ON THE ONE HAND, HE IS OBVIOUSLY OF INTEREST AND MIGHT HAVE SOME FUTURE ROLE. REFUSAL TO SEE HIM WILL BE ATTACKED AS STUFFY AND UNIMAGINATIVE.

ON THE OTHER, THE PRIME MINISTER DOES NOT WANT TO MAKE GORBACHEV'S LIFE MORE DIFFICULT AT WHAT IS ANYWAY AN AWKWARD ENOUGH TIME.

THE BUSH SOLUTION OF A 'CHANCE' MEETING WAS TRANSPARENT AND UNCONVINCING. WE NEED TO SAY EITHER YES OR NO.

I THINK THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ADVICE. WOULD IT HELP, FOR INSTANCE, IF WE EXPLAINED FRANKLY TO GORBACHEV'S OFFICE THAT ((NEXT WORD UNDERLINED)) NOT SEEING YELTSIN WOULD CAUSE MORE TROUBLE AND PUBLIC COMMENT THAN AGREEING TO MEET HIM BRIEFLY?

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