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From the Private Secretary

24 October 1990

SUBJECT CCMASTER

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT COSSIGA

The Prime Minister had a talk this afternoon with President Cossiga, following her lunch in his honour. The discussion was largely of a philosophical nature about the problems of modern society, including criminality, drugs and terrorism. The Prime Minister categorised some problems, such as that of Northern Ireland, as basically insoluble. All one could do was to try to contain them and ensure that whatever happened terrorism was never allowed to win.

There was a brief exchange on the Gulf on which President Cossiga showed himself wholeheartedly behind insistence on Iraq's complete and unconditional withdrawal of Kuwait and restoration of the legitimate Government. He also agreed with the Prime Minister that Saddam Hussain should pay compensation, on the need for a regional security structure and on the importance of dealing with Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons capability.

The subject of Europe was barely broached. The Prime Minister tells me that she had some talk over lunch with the Italian Foreign Minister who insisted that he was one of the very few non-federalist politicians in Italy, but urged her to be pragmatic about the future at the European Council in Rome. The Prime Minister made clear that she would insist on discussion of the problem of agriculture in the GATT round. Signor de Michelis observed that Chancellor Kohl had to win his election.

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