



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

30 September 1985

RETIREMENT OF PRIME MINISTER TIKHONOV

Thank you for your letter of 27 September enclosing a draft message of congratulation to Mr Ryzhkov on his appointment as Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The Prime Minister thinks that in the present climate of relations a message would be out of place. She has decided not to send one.

C D POWELL

Colin Budd Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

VC



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 September 1985

Dear Charles,

Retirement of Prime Minister Tikhonov

We have had advance warning through the BBC Monitoring Service that it will shortly be announced that Prime Minister Tikhonov has retired on health grounds, and that the Soviet Praesidium have approved the proposal of Gorbachev and the Politburo that N I Ryzhkov should be his successor.

Tikhonov's retirement has come rather earlier than expected and confirms that Gorbachev is in a commanding position. At 55 Ryzhkov is one of the younger, more technocratic members of the Politburo. He served as deputy minister of Heavy Industry and First Deputy Chairman of the Soviet National Plan. Before his promotion to the Politburo in April this year, he served on the Secretariat of the Central Committee responsible for the economy in general.

The Prime Minister sent a message of congratulation to Tikhonov when he was appointed, on Kosygin's death, in October 1980. We recommend that she should also send such a message on this occasion. The 1980 message was mostly about Kosygin's career (the Prime Minister had of course met the latter in 1979). This time, we have suggested that a sentence about UK/Soviet relations might be timely, with a nod in Tikhonov's direction (as far as we can see from our records, the Prime Minister did no more than shake his hand at the Andropov and Chernenko funerals).

I attach a draft. This could be despatched any time tomorrow morning. The FCO Resident Clerk will arrange to send it by telegram to Moscow. We would be grateful to know at the same time whether the Prime Minister would wish the text of the message to be made public in London, or simply the fact of its existence. Either way, we would hope that the Embassy could be left enough time to deliver the message (i.e. until Saturday late afternoon, our time).

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

N I Ryzhkov

Chairman of the Council of Ministers

of the USSR

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

I send you my congratulations on your appointment as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. among your many responsibilities I hope that /in this high post you will be able, with your Government, to join in the work of improving relations between our two countries, to which I and the British Government are firmly committed.

I would be grateful if you would transmit to Mr Tikhonov my hopes that his health will improve and my good wishes for his retirement after his long service to the Soviet Union.

Enclosures—flag(s).....