

SUBJECT cc  
MASTER

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From the Private Secretary

22 December 1986

Dear Colin,

## PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Ambassador called on the Prime Minister this afternoon to deliver what he described as a message from the Soviet leadership about the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union. This was to the effect that the Soviet leadership attached great importance to continuing and deepening the political dialogue with Great Britain and hoped that the Prime Minister's forthcoming visit would mark a new and important stage in direct talks between the leaders of the two countries. The talks should concentrate on searching for solutions to the cardinal problems of international security. They should also give a serious impetus to the development of comprehensive co-operation between the two countries. To ensure that the visit met these objectives, it should be properly prepared between the appropriate Government departments of each country, which should start work as soon as possible. The dates proposed by the Prime Minister of 30 March/1 April were acceptable to the Soviet leadership. The Prime Minister would be a guest of the Soviet Government.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Zamyatin for this message and expressed her appreciation that Mr. Gorbachev was able to accept the dates which she had proposed. This was most considerate. She was also grateful that he had seen Sir Bryan Cartledge for such a full and lively discussion. She herself much preferred discussions in which people said quite frankly and openly what they thought. As regards the subjects for discussion during her visit, she would not wish these to be limited to aspects of arms control but would want to talk on a broader basis about the sources of international tension. We were entering a particularly interesting period in international relations and her visit would be very timely.

Mr. Zamyatin commented that the interesting developments extended to human rights. The Soviet authorities had now settled the problem of Mr. Sakharov and Mrs. Bonner and he could confirm that Mr. Gorbachev had telephoned Mr. Sakharov directly to inform him that he was free to return to Moscow and pursue his scientific work. The Prime Minister said that she had just had a most interesting meeting with Irina

Ratushinskaya whom she had found to be a quiet and purposeful lady and the author of poetry which was full of feeling and expression. Mr. Zamyatin said that he was not familiar with Mrs. Ratushinskaya's poetry but hoped that the Prime Minister recalled that she had raised Mrs. Ratushinskaya's case with Mr. Shevardnadze. The Soviet Government had now responded directly to her concern. The Prime Minister said that she appreciated this but of course hoped that Mrs Ratushinskaya's release would be followed by many more.

Mr. Zamyatin asked whether the Prime Minister had any particular wishes for the programme for her visit. The Prime Minister said that she would prefer to think further about this. She had already been to Leningrad. She was also keen to leave ample time for talks, but would certainly like to see something of the Soviet Union outside Moscow. She had a personal interest in a visit to the Institute of Crystallography. She would also like to see something of the Soviet space programme if that were possible. Mr. Zamyatin said that he was sure the Prime Minister could see whatever she wished. He mentioned that Mr. Walker's visit to Kiev had been very satisfactory. The Prime Minister commented that she had read the full report on the Chernobyl disaster and wished to compliment the Soviet authorities on the very thorough job which they had done.

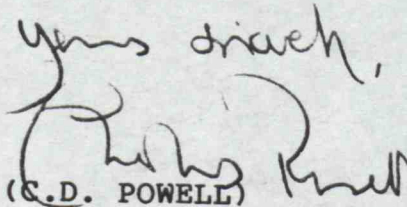
The Prime Minister agreed that it would be useful for her visit to be well prepared between the two Governments. The Ambassador should pursue this aspect with the Foreign Office, but should also remain in touch directly with her own office.

It was agreed that the press would be told that the Ambassador had called to convey a further message from Mr. Gorbachev about the Prime Minister's visit, for which dates had been agreed in principle and would be announced in due course.

You will want to contact the Soviet Embassy after the Christmas/New Year break to consider how to take forward work on the preparations for the visit. It would also be helpful to have some suggestions for the programme.

I enclose a copy of Mr. Zamyatin's speaking note.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to John Howe (Ministry of Defence) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely,*  
  
 (C.D. POWELL)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,  
 Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Unofficial translation

The Soviet leadership attaches great importance to continuation and deepening of the political dialogue with Great Britain started by the visit of M.S.Gorbachyov to London in December, 1984. We hope that the forthcoming visit of Prime-Minister M.Thatcher to the Soviet Union will become a new important stage in the direct talk of the leaders of our two countries. The main contents of such a dialogue, in the opinion of the Soviet side, should be joint searching for the solutions of the cardinal problems of international security, limitation of the arms race and disarmament, first of all nuclear one.

It would be also hopeful that the forthcoming visit of the British Prime-Minister gives a serious impetus to the development of a comprehensive cooperation between the two countries on a stable basis, has weighty, concrete results in order to achieve further progressive development of the Soviet-British relations, incorporating into them new forms and directions of mutually beneficial ties. It is evident that for these purposes the visit should be properly prepared and the corresponding departments of both countries have to start this work without any delay. The Soviet side is ready for that.

The proposed dates for Mrs.M.Thatcher's visit to the USSR (March, 30 - April, 1 1987) are acceptable for the Soviet leadership. The Prime-Minister, who is to arrive to the USSR as a guest of the Soviet Government, will be given due attention and hospitality.