

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

8 April 1987

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

I should record that Mr Kossov of the Soviet Embassy came to see me this morning, ostensibly to hand over some photographs of the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union. He took the opportunity to add a number of comments about the visit.

Mr Kossov said that his Ambassador had called on Mr Gorbachev shortly before returning to London. He had found Mr Gorbachev very well satisfied with the Prime Minister's visit, despite the vigorous nature of their exchanges. He thought that their talks had very usefully clarified their respective points of view and had identified possibilities for progress, particularly on the INF negotiations. Mr Gorbachev wanted to retain his "special relationship" with the Prime Minister. It would be important to build on the achievements of the visit.

Mr Kossov said that the Prime Minister's thank you letter to Mr Gorbachev conveying the Cabinet's assessment of the results of her visit had been very timely. It had arrived in Moscow while the Politburo discussion was still in progress and had been well received. His understanding was that it had affected the nature of the Politburo's own published conclusions.

Mr Kossov said that when he and his Ambassador had arrived in Moscow before the visit, they had found senior Soviet officials very exercised about the Prime Minister's Torquay speech. This had been given a rather exaggerated slant by Tass, which had brought it to the notice of the Soviet leadership. There had been lively debate about how the Soviet Union should respond, which explained Mr Gorbachev's comments at the opening of his talks with the Prime Minister. Mr Gorbachev's speech at the Kremlin dinner had been intended as a riposte to the Torquay speech rather than to the Prime Minister's own speech in Moscow.

Mr Kossov went on to raise a number of arms control points. He claimed that the main Soviet objection to the way in which the Prime Minister formulated her views on the

CONFIDENTIAL



importance of nuclear deterrence was that it would only encourage third countries to acquire nuclear weapons. I said that the Prime Minister's point was that it would always be essential for the major powers to retain nuclear weapons against the eventuality that other, less responsible countries, would acquire them.

Mr Kossov commented that there had been useful progress in the Prime Minister's talks with Mr Gorbachev on INF. There was now debate in Moscow as to whether the Prime Minister's point about the Western right to match Soviet shorter-range systems could not best be met by a zero-zero solution for these systems as well. The matter might be raised in the talks with Secretary Shultz next week. I recalled that the Prime Minister had stressed that the West had to be able to retain some weapons in these categories to offset Soviet conventional and chemical superiority.

Mr Kossov said that the Prime Minister's ideas on predictability of strategic defence research had been very carefully noted. He enquired whether they had been agreed with the Americans in advance. I said that the Americans had been informed shortly before the Prime Minister's visit but had not given their agreement. Mr Kossov said that the Soviet Union could not break the link between SDI and START. But if it were possible to make some progress on the lines indicated by the Prime Minister, this could enable a start to be made towards the goal of 50 per cent reductions in strategic nuclear weapons.

I said that we were sorry to hear that Mr Gorbachev was indisposed. Mr Kossov was evidently amused and said that he had rarely seen a man look more healthy than Mr Gorbachev last week. Although he had no information, he assumed the postponement of Mr Gorbachev's visit to Czechoslovakia might be because of difficulties over the proposals which he intended to announce there affecting both conventional forces and shorter range nuclear weapons. Another reason might be the need for Mr Gorbachev to be directly involved in the preparations for Mr Shultz's visit to Moscow next week. It was not to be excluded that some Soviet positions would be revised in the light of the talks with the Prime Minister. This could cause some difficulties which Mr. Gorbachev himself would have to sort out.

I am not able to judge how far Kossov is simply speculating or has information on any of these points. But his comments are certainly of some interest.

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

C D POWELL

A. C. Galsworthy, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



CDD

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

I am not sure  
you actually had  
time to read the  
letter. There are  
some quite important  
points in it - if  
you have time.

CDD  
9/4.

ms

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR VISIT TO MOSCOW

I attach a copy of a letter which I have sent to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office about a conversation I had this morning with Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy about your visit to Moscow. It contains a number of points of interest.

C.D.P.

CHARLES POWELL

8 April 1987

*[Handwritten signature]*



*lee*

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR VISIT TO MOSCOW

I attach a copy of a letter which I have sent to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office about a conversation I had this morning with Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy about your visit to Moscow. It contains a number of points of interest.

CHARLES POWELL

8 April 1987

*Secretary of State*

From: Derek Thomas  
13 APR 1987

Date: 10 April 1987

*eh*

CONFIDENTIAL

11 12 1  
10 2  
9 3  
8 4  
7 6 5

Private Secretary

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW: KOSOV'S CALL ON MR POWELL

1. I was interested to read Mr Thorpe's submission of 8 April. I have two additional comments.
2. Kossov is Zamyatin's blue-eyed boy at present. He was also, incidentally, one of only two people in the Soviet Embassy whom Suslov trusted. He is unusually articulate and free-speaking, for a Soviet official. He has also been recently promoted and moved to deal with arms control subjects in the Soviet Embassy. It was Kossov who telephoned to ask for our interpreter's record of the restricted discussion in Moscow. I suspect that what all this adds up to is that Zamyatin is now using him to try to establish a privileged line to No 10. I do not see great harm in this, provided we are kept in touch.
3. My other comment is that, as Mr Thorpe says, Gorbachev's reported wish to retain his "special relationship" with the Prime Minister is no doubt intended to be both flattering and wedge-driving. But we should not discount the possibility that it is also genuine. He clearly enjoyed arguing, with no holds barred, with a Western political leader of the Prime Minister's quality. He may also have felt he learned something. I agree with Mr Thorpe's conclusion that we should remain cautious about Soviet attempts to build up a special relationship, but not to the point of discouraging the Prime Minister from maintaining it.

*This might be shared with C.P. Derek Thomas.*

Derek Thomas

cc  
PS/Mr Renton  
PS/PUS  
Mr Boyd  
Mr Fall  
Mr Ratford  
Defence Dept  
Mr Brinkley

*cc (personal)  
Mr Powell, No 10.  
D 15/4.*