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From the Private Secretary

20 November 1987

Dear Lynn,

UNITED STATES/SOVIET SUMMIT: POSSIBLE STOP-OVER IN THE  
UNITED KINGDOM BY MR. GORBACHEV

The Prime Minister took the opportunity of Mr. Aganbegyan's call this morning to have a brief word with the Soviet Ambassador.

The Prime Minister expressed gratitude for Mr. Gorbachev's message about the Kings Cross fire. People in this country had been touched by the gesture. She hoped the Ambassador would inform Mr. Gorbachev of this.

The Prime Minister went on to say that if there were any possibility of Mr. Gorbachev stopping in the United Kingdom briefly on his way to Washington, she would be very pleased to meet him. There were many important topics to be discussed. Were he to come, she envisaged a meeting at Brize Norton where there were excellent facilities. Mr. Zamyatin said that the matter was being considered in Moscow. His personal feeling was that Mr. Gorbachev would come, although there would probably not be a decision for several days yet. He had passed on to Moscow the details of Brize Norton which I had provided. He hoped that every effort will be made to keep the possibility of Mr. Gorbachev coming here secret. Premature publicity might well lead to the idea being dropped. The Prime Minister said that knowledge of the possibility was being kept to a very small circle.

I am copying this letter to John Howe (Ministry of Defence).

Yours sincerely,

(C.D. POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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