

E.R.

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PERSONAL SOVIET UNION: Relations PM (i)

Faxed
12/10

PRIME MINISTER

POSSIBLE VISIT OF MR. GORBACHEV

CD 13/11

You will wish to see the attached note describing my conversation with Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy.

What I have not referred to, at his specific request, is his view that there is still a distinct possibility that Mr. Gorbachev may ask at short notice to come here in December this year. Having blurted this out, he then got frightfully nervous about it and begged me not to mention it to anyone else. He said that Gorbachev himself seemed to want to come then but others in Moscow were opposed. In the current situation it was very difficult to know exactly what would happen and when, but we should not rule out the possibility of such a visit. He would tip me off as soon as he heard anything definite. I said that you were perfectly relaxed about the timing of a visit and would do your best to fit in with Mr. Gorbachev's wishes.

I have not reported this part of the conversation to the Foreign Office or others. I am never quite sure where Kossov gets his information from, but he is a close friend of the official in the Central Committee who looks after Mrs. Gorbachev's programme, so that may be the source.

Would you be ready to see Mr. Katushev next week (see letter)?

C.D.P.

Yes - I could not

C. D. POWELL

10 October 1988

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