

## Conservative Research Department

32 Smith Square Westminster SW1P 3HH

Telephone 01-222 9511

Mr. Whitegold

Dear Mr Powell,

Spoken

to see  
or.

I would be very grateful if you could **MR**  
**WITH COMPLIMENTS** cast your eye over the  
enclosed. There will be a second, shorter,  
piece on the PM's trip to Africa later today.  
With thanks, Tim Collins

1. WHY MR GORBACHEV CAME TO BRITAIN

CCPC  
It also comes before Mr. Gorbachev can spend an official visit to any other European country

Recognising Britain's Revival Mr Gorbachev's visit to Britain from April 5th to 7th was his third visit to this country in just over four years. The only previous British visit by a Soviet leader took place in 1956. The unprecedentedly frequent discussions between Mr Gorbachev and the Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, (including two meetings in Moscow), are an impressive testimonial to the revival in Britain's global standing after ten years of Conservative Government.

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It was Mrs. Thatcher who first identified Mr. Gorbachev as a man who can do business with a ~~good~~ first ~~step~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~public~~ ~~support~~ ~~and~~ ~~encouragement~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~politics~~

Tributes to Success Soviet newspapers have analysed and admired the transformation of Britain's economy. In particular, both Pravda (the official newspaper of the Soviet government) and Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya (a daily newspaper produced by the Central Committee of the Communist Party) have been fulsome in their praise:

we public support & encouragement to his politics of reforming & openness

- \* "The Thatcher Government came to power in the Spring of 1979 with a remedy for the 'English disease' - private enterprise... This course of action has led to the revival of industrial activity and has speeded up modernisation of the country's economy" (Pravda 5th December 1988).
- \* "The UK economy is now growing....faster than that of any other leading capitalist country with the exception of Japan. Exports have emerged from a long period of stagnation ...this amazing phenomenon" (ibid).
- \* "Britain's idleness and inefficiency meant it was lagging behind...Successive governments were to blame for this..."



...By the time of the 1979/81 Crisis, 'Old Lady Britain' was on her last legs. In these desperate conditions, Britain needed a leader, or a team of leaders who would rapidly rectify things. They turned out to be Margaret Thatcher with her team of advisers" (Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya, 14th December 1988).

\* "Mrs Thatcher's cabinet has reacted quickly to Britain's problems and learned from the mistakes of the past...By the mid-80s, 'Old Lady Britain' had the muscles of a champion body-builder' (ibid).

\* "The Left have been in retreat for ten years, unable to respond to the Thatcher challenge, unable to adapt to life in the 1980s" (Pravda 5th December 1988).

A Record of Achievement Since 1979 Britain's international reputation has been restored. Under Conservative leadership Britain has:

- \* set the agenda in Europe, on the Single European Market, on agriculture and budget reform and on closer foreign policy co-operation;
- \* been the most staunch ally in NATO, putting Anglo-American relations on their best footing since the war;
- \* ~~taken the lead in revitalising the Western European Union and expanding its membership;~~  
*+ brought Zimbabwe to independence & needed agent to safeguard (the) King's position as a free society after 1997*
- \* repulsed aggression in the Falklands;

- \* ~~played a key role in Africa (see below)~~
- \* ~~adopted a tough line~~ *taken the lead in the campaign* against international terrorism and drug smuggling;
- \* spoken out for liberty, human rights and the virtues of free enterprise around the world.

Moreover, as the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, has noted 'Around the world our message that markets really work has become the established orthodoxy of the day' (The Conservative Revival of Britain, CPC, October 1988).

Building Better East-West Relations      The Conservative success in rebuilding Britain's economy and international prestige has given this country a pivotal role in the improvement in East-West relations. The Government's policy in this field is based on three key themes:

- \* *Resolve*  
Resolution to restore Britain's defences and to deploy Cruise Missiles in 1983 against the bitter opposition of all other parties. This convinced the Soviet Union that its former tactics of intimidation would not work. This firm approach was vindicated by the INF Treaty, the first treaty ever to reduce nuclear weapons, eliminating Soviet weapons carrying 1700 nuclear warheads.
- \* Readiness to negotiate sensibly with the countries of the Warsaw Pact, demonstrated by visits since 1983 <sup>out</sup> to every country in <sup>Eastern</sup> Europe by the Foreign Secretary and to Hungary, the Soviet Union and Poland by the Prime Minister.



\* Realism to combine a warm welcome for the reforms and arms reductions announced by Mr Gorbachev with a recognition that the Soviet Union is still far from a genuine democracy, and still maintains a huge superiority in weaponry over NATO.

*and continues to modernize its arsenal.  
Recognition that a strong defence including nuclear weapons is essential under deterrence*

The Continuing Threat The recent Soviet announcements of reductions to be made in the size of their armed forces over the next two years were immediately welcomed by the Government. But as Mrs Thatcher noted, "even after the reductions the Soviet Union will have 41,500 tanks compared to 16,500 for NATO, 35,000 artillery pieces compared to 14,000 for NATO. Therefore, there will still be a major asymmetry in the Soviet Union's favour" (Hansard, 8th December 1988).

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Sir Geoffrey Howe has also pointed out that: "It is interesting to see the way in which the Soviet Union are constantly seeking to beguile public opinion by throwing something else into the pot. The thing that still looms large over the European continent is this huge bear of a Russian army, a tremendously well-armed massive army, well-stocked with tanks and artillery" (The Guardian, 3rd April 1989).

Consequently, the Government firmly supports NATO's proposal for a reduction in the total numbers of tanks and artillery pieces in Europe to half their present level with equal ceilings for both sides. The continuing Soviet superiority in conventional forces & weapons also makes NATO's agreed strategy of nuclear deterrence an essential guarantee of peace.

The Winning Formula      April 4th 1989 marked the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of NATO, an alliance which has kept Europe at peace for the longest period in centuries.

In a joint statement to mark the occasion, Sir Geoffrey Howe and the Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger noted, "The 40th anniversary comes at an exciting time for all of us in the Alliance, a time when our firmness and unity may at last be bringing about real and overdue change in the Soviet Union and East Europe. The formula for this success has been to couple dialogue with the maintenance of forces adequate to preserve our security. We are confident that this winning formula will continue to bring progress and maintain the peace" (Daily Telegraph, 4th April 1989).

Britain's Role      The Prime Minister has explained the role of her Government in East-West relations: "I see Britain's role to be constantly looking for ways to increase contacts between East and West, to extend economic links and to promote understanding so that the Iron Curtain which descended on Europe after World War Two can be lifted" (Daily Telegraph, 28th October 1988).





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Recognising Britain's Revival Mr. Gorbachev's visit to Britain from April 5th to 7th was his third visit to this country in just over four years. The only previous British visit by a Soviet leader took place in 1956. It also comes before Mr. Gorbachev has paid an official visit to any other European country. The unprecedently frequent discussions between Mr. Gorbachev and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, (including two meetings in Moscow), are an impressive testimonial to the revival in Britain's global standing after ten years of Conservative Government. It was Mrs. Thatcher who first identified Mr. Gorbachev as a man we can do business with and was the first Western leader to give public support and encouragement to his policies of restructuring and openness.

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- \* Readiness to negotiate sensibly with the countries of the Warsaw Pact, demonstrated by visits since 1983 to Hungary, the Soviet Union and Poland by the Prime Minister, and to every country in Eastern Europe by the Foreign Secretary.
- \* Realism to combine a warm welcome for the reforms and arms reductions announced by Mr. Gorbachev with a recognition that the Soviet Union is still far from a genuine democracy, maintains a huge superiority in weaponry over NATO and continues to modernise its arsenal.
- \* Recognition that a strong defence including an independent British nuclear deterrent is the best basis from which to seek better relations with the Soviet Union.



The Continuing Threat The recent Soviet announcements of reductions to be made in the size of their armed forces over the next two years were immediately welcomed by the government. But as Mrs. Thatcher noted, "even after the reductions the Soviet Union will have 41,500 tanks compared to 16,500 for NATO, 35,000 artillery pieces compared to 14,000 for NATO. Therefore, there will still be a major asymmetry in the Soviet Union's favour" (Hansard, 8th December 1988).

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