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From the Private Secretary

18 April 1989

Dae Stephen,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE
SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER

The Prime Minister had a short talk with the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Petrovsky, before the opening of the CSCE Information Forum this morning.

Mr. Petrovsky said that he brought warm greetings from Mr. Gorbachev who wished to confirm officially his invitation to the Prime Minister to visit the Soviet Union in 1990. At the same time he was instructed to say that the Soviet authorities agreed to the holding of a British Week in Kiev in 1990, and Mr. Gorbachev would be happy to go there to meet the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister said that this was very good news. She thought a regular dialogue was to the benefit of both Governments. Mr. Gorbachev's visit to Britain had been very much appreciated and aroused enormous interest. She had reported the results to Cabinet and her report had been very positively received. She hoped that the friendly and constructive relationship which had developed between them would help Mr. Gorbachev through difficult times while he was trying to achieve great things in the Soviet Union. She was grateful for the invitation for 1990 which she accepted with pleasure.

Mr. Petrovsky said that Mr. Gorbachev's visit had also been rated highly in the Soviet Union. There had been a special Politburo meeting shortly after Mr. Gorbachev's return, at which the results of the visit had been discussed. The conclusion reached was that relations with Britain had greatly improved not just in spirit but also in substance.


Mr. Petrovsky referred to the aims of the London Information Forum. The Soviet Union intended to help achieve a positive outcome by words and deeds. The Prime Minister said that she hoped the meeting would take further steps going beyond what had been agreed at Vienna. Mr. Petrovsky said there was now a new quality to East/West dialogue and the Soviet Government was optimistic about the prospects for progress in the conventional force reduction negotiations. They were looking closely at NATO's proposals; and while they did not agree with all of them they saw a chance to move forward.

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There was a brief discussion of the significance of the elections in the Soviet Union and of developments in Georgia.

It was agreed to tell the press that the Prime Minister had received Mr. Gorbachev's message expressing pleasure with his visit. Both sides wished to establish a continuous dialogue at the highest level and in that spirit Mr. Gorbachev had invited the Prime Minister to visit the Soviet Union in 1990, with both leaders going to Kiev. The Prime Minister had accepted the invitation. She had also expressed her gratitude for Mr. Gorbachev's message of sympathy following the tragedy at Hillsborough in Sheffield.

I am copying this letter to Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence), Alex Allan (HM Treasury), Neil Thornton (Department of Trade and Industry) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,


(C. D. POWELL)

Stephen Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.