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From the Private Secretary

10 May 1989

See paper.

EXPULSION OF MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET AND CZECH EMBASSIES

Thank you for your letter of 10 May on this subject. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary had a further word about it this evening. It was agreed to proceed with the Czech expulsions some 5 or 6 days after the expulsion of members of the Soviet Embassy on 19 May.

The Prime Minister expressed some concern that the assurance in her letter to Mr. Gorbachev that we would not give publicity to the expulsions would be difficult to honour once news of them began to leak out and we were directly challenged about them in Parliament or by the press. The best way to deal with this would be for H M Ambassador in Moscow to make the point, in handing over the letter, that while we would not initiate publicity, we could not avoid confirming the expulsions if news of them became public from other sources.

I am copying this letter to Colin Walters (Home Office) and the Director General of the Security Service.

Yours sincerely,
C. D. Powell

C. D. POWELL

Stephen Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office