



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 September 1989

*John Charles,*

Prime Minister's Stopover in Moscow Today

You have seen Moscow Telno 1587 reporting that Nikolai Pavlovich Laverov (pronounced Lav-yor-off) is likely to meet the Prime Minister at Moscow Airport during the stopover today - a further copy of the telegram is enclosed for ease of reference. I write to send you a short factual personality note on him.

*Yours ever,*

*Richard Gozney*

(R H T Gozney)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

*cc: PC  
cc: PP*

*CDP  
18/9*

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FM MOSCOW  
TO DESKBY 161300Z FCO  
TELNO 1587  
OF 161221Z SEPTEMBER 89

RESIDENT CLERK PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING TO HEMANS (SOVIET DEPARTMENT) AND POWELL (NO 10).

THE PM'S VISIT: STOPOVER ON 18 SEPTEMBER.

1. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TELL US THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERLOCUTOR ON 18 SEPTEMBER IS NOW MORE LIKELY TO BE NIKOLAI PAVLOVICH LAVEROV (PRONOUNCED 'LAV-YOR-OFF' WITH THE ACCENT ON THE SECOND SYLLABLE) RATHER THAN ABALYIN.
2. LAVEROV SUCCEEDED TOLSTYKH (WHOM THE PRIME MINISTER MET IN LONDON IN NOVEMBER 1987) AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AS PART OF THIS SUMMER'S GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE. HE IS A SEISMOLOGIST AND SINCE 1987 HAS BEEN A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES WHERE HE SUPERVISES ALL EARTH SCIENCES. HE IS WELL-REGARDED AS A SCIENTIST. WHEN I CALLED SHORTLY AFTER HIS APPOINTMENT, HE STRUCK ME AS ALTOGETHER MORE LIVELY, SELF-CONFIDENT AND OUTGOING THAN HIS PREDECESSOR, A PLEASANT BUT RETIRING ENGINEER WHO WAS CLEARLY UNCOMFORTABLE, IN MANOEUVERING AT THE INTERFACE BETWEEN THE SCIENTIFIC, POLITICAL, AND INDUSTRIAL WORLDS.
3. IT IS PRECISELY THIS AREA WHERE THE STATE COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS LIE. ITS TASK IS TO HARNESS THE UNDOUBTED RESOURCES OF SOVIET SCIENCE FOR THE PRACTICAL BENEFIT OF SOVIET INDUSTRY. IT HAS ALSO BEEN ONE OF THE MEANS BY WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE SOUGHT OUT FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY FOR DOMESTIC APPLICATION. IT HAS ALWAYS HAD A KEEN INTEREST IN WESTERN MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES. BOTH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND BRITISH BUSINESS HAVE KNOWN IT WELL FOR MANY YEARS. MOST RECENTLY TWENTY MANAGERS SPONSORED BY THE STATE COMMITTEE ATTENDED A VERY SUCCESSFUL COURSE AT THE LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL IN APRIL. A FURTHER TWENTY-FIVE ARE DUE THERE IN NOVEMBER. LAVEROV HIMSELF HOPES TO ATTEND THE SECOND TRILATERAL (ANGLO-US-SOVIET) DITCHLEY CONFERENCE IN MAY 1990.
4. LAVEROV EMPHASISED TO ME THAT HE SAW HIS NEW TASK AS THE COORDINATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF A SENSIBLE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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POLICY, RATHER THAN ITS MANAGEMENT. HE HAD ALREADY IDENTIFIED FIVE PRIORITY AREAS: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, HIGH-TEMPERATURE SUPERCONDUCTIVITY, AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION, NUCLEAR AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, AND NEW MATERIALS. HE WAS WORKING ON 14 MORE SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES AS WELL (E.G. ON THE HUMAN GENOME). BUT HE BELIEVED THAT ALL THESE SHOULD BE PROMOTED BY ECONOMIC, NOT ADMINISTRATIVE MEANS. THE MEANS COULD INCLUDE TAX INCENTIVES (A CONCEPT SO FAR WITHOUT SERIOUS APPLICATION IN THE UNREFORMABLE SOVIET ECONOMY): PROVISION OF A GREATER PROPORTION OF CENTRAL FUNDS TO SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTES THROUGH COMPETITION, NOT ALLOCATION: BREAK UP OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL MONOPOLIES: DIVERSION OF DEFENCE R AND D TO CIVILIAN USE: PROVISION OF FUNDS TO VERY SMALL GROUPS OF INDEPENDENT RESEARCHERS WITH BRIGHT NEW IDEAS (THE AMERICAN 'SKUNK HOLE' APPROACH, OF WHICH APPLE COMPUTERS IS ONE WELL-KNOWN EXAMPLE). HE HOPED THAT THESE DEVICES WOULD BRING SOVIET SCIENCE AND CIVILIAN INDUSTRY INTO THE MUCH MORE PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAD HITHERTO BEEN LACKING.

5. THE PROBLEMS OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT WHICH LAVEROV FACES HAVE ANALOGIES WITH OUR OWN, THOUGH THEY ARE ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE GREATER. SO TOO HAVE HIS IDEAS ABOUT ECONOMIC STIMULI, WHICH ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIDER SOVIET THINKING ABOUT ECONOMIC REFORM. THERE IS MUCH OF INTEREST WHICH - DRAWING ON THE FOREGOING - THE PRIME MINISTER COULD DISCUSS WITH HIM WITHIN HIS IMPORTANT BUT LIMITED AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

6. BUT MY IMPRESSION IS THAT LAVEROV WOULD ALSO BE CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING A WIDER-RANGING DISCUSSION. THUS:

- (A) THE SOVIET SPACE PROGRAMME (INCREASINGLY CRITICISED BECAUSE OF THE SCARCE RESOURCES IT CONSUMES):
- (B) POPULAR OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION:
- (C) THE POLICY OF CONVERTING DEFENCE INDUSTRY TO CIVILIAN USE WHICH GOES WELL BEYOND THE R AND D AREA):
- (D) THE ECONOMIC REFORM AS A WHOLE (WHAT PROBLEMS - POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, PRACTICAL - DOES LAVEROV SEE IN GETTING SOVIET INDUSTRIAL, AS WELL AS SCIENTIFIC WORKERS TO RESPOND TO THE ECONOMIC STIMULI HE FAVOURS? DOES HE HAVE VIEWS ON THE AUSTERITY PACKAGE WHICH GORBACHEV FORESHADOWED IN HIS RECENT TV SPEECH?)

6. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER LAVEROV COULD BE TEMPTED INTO A PURELY POLITICAL DISCUSSION, E.G. ON THE NATIONALITIES ISSUE (THE PLENUM

STARTS THE DAY AFTER THE PRIME MINISTER SEES HIM): OR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPREME SOVIET, GOVERNMENT, AND PARTY (THE SUPREME SOVIET RESUMES WORK ON 25 SEPTEMBER AND ITS ACTIVITIES ARE LIKELY TO TEST THAT RELATIONSHIP STILL FURTHER). BUT THERE WOULD BE NO HARM IN TRYING.

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NIKOLAI PAVLOVICH LAVEROV (PRONOUNCED LAVYOROV), DEPUTY  
CHAIRMAN OF THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND CHAIRMAN OF  
THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Born 1930. Geologist. Pioneered new method of metal  
analysis, and spent many years prospecting in Soviet Central  
Asia.

1972-83 headed a laboratory in the Ministry of Geology.  
1983-1987 was First Pro-Rector of the Academy of the  
National Economy attached to the Council of Ministers  
(also in charge of the Department of Natural Resources and  
Environmental Protection).

1987-1989 President of the Academy of Sciences of the Kirgiz  
Republic. 1988 elected as Vice-President of the USSR  
Academy of Sciences.

June 1989 appointed as Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council  
of Ministers and Chairman of the State Committee for Science  
and Technology.

We have no information about his family or personal  
interests.

