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PRIME MINISTER

Sir Geoffrey Howe's Visit to Moscow

Is it really a good idea to issue an invitation at this moment to Chernenko to visit the UK? It is obviously a good idea to invite Gorbachev and Aliev: there is a chance they will come and it would do them good. But no-one seriously expects Chernenko to come for the time being: so it just looks like a routine gesture, made at a moment when such gestures might seem rather offensive against the background of Sakharov and Shcharansky, etc.

I have discussed with Stephen, who shares this view.

You will wish to glance at Sir G. Howe's speech, particularly paragraphs 12, 13, 19, 21 and 22. Any comments?

C D P

*No not invite Ch. Chernenko - it is much too soon not.*

C. D. POWELL

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