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From the Private Secretary

29 December 1988

Thank you for your letter of 29 December about the visit of the Yugoslav Foreign Minister. The general rule has been to ask the Prime Minister to see only a very limited number of Foreign Ministers. There is a separate request in for her to see the Japanese Foreign Minister to which I think the Prime Minister will agree. She has also agreed to see the Spanish Foreign Minister. There will no doubt be other candidates later in the year. Is the Yugoslav Foreign Minister really in the highest category?

Incidentally, I do not think that the argument that failure to see Mr. Loncar would undermine the progress achieved by the visit of Mr. Djuranovic is a very good one: if applied more broadly that sort of pleading either locks the Prime Minister into seeing senior Yugoslav visitors at regular intervals ever hereafter, or means it is better never to see any of them since failure to see all undermines the benefit of seeing one.

(CHARLES POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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~~Call~~



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 December 1988

Dear Charles,

The Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Mr Budimir Loncar, is to visit Britain on 6 and 7 February 1989 as a Guest of Government. Previous visits by Yugoslav Foreign Ministers, Mr Vrhorec in 1981 and Mr Dizdarevic in 1984, included short calls on the Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary believes it would be useful if she were able to receive Mr Loncar for a short call during his visit.

The Prime Minister could urge the need for economic and political reforms and press the Yugoslavs to keep to their economic commitments entered into under the agreement with the IMF in June. She could also press for a settlement of our outstanding claim over the Zagreb air disaster of 1976. The Prime Minister's views on these subjects would undoubtedly carry great weight with the Yugoslavs.

There has been an open invitation from the Yugoslavs to the Prime Minister to visit Belgrade for some time, which she has not taken up. If she were to refuse to see Mr Loncar, this could undermine the progress achieved by the visit of Mr Djuranovic, member of the Yugoslav Federal Presidency, in March 1988 (he subsequently wrote to the Prime Minister about the sale of Airbus in October).

Yours ever

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

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