

FILE

VLB

PM Tours Abroad.

R E S T R I C T E D

cc CO

7 December 1981

Economic Summit 1982

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 3 December to Michael Alexander and Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 4 December.

The Prime Minister has approved the text of the letter to President Mitterrand, which has been dispatched today. She agrees that Sir Robert Armstrong should have authority, at the discussion between personal representatives on 12/13 December, provisionally to accept the dates of 7 and 8 June as a basis for planning, on the understanding that we should have to re-open the question if, contrary to present expectations, 8 June again became a possibility for a State Visit.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

A J COLES

R. M. J. Lyne, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

R E S T R I C T E D



①

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Economic Summit.

Before signing the attached letter to President Nitterand you will wish to read :-

- A. (a) the F./C.O. advice
B. (b) his Robert Armstrong's minute.

2. It is now unlikely that there will be a State Visit on 8 June. But we cannot be certain until we hear further from the Americans and the Spaniards.

3. Do you agree

(a) to write to Rutterford in the
terms proposed

(b) that Sir R. Armstrong
should have authority, in his
discussions on 12 and 13 December,
to accept the 7/8 June dates
provisionally if there is no
alternative and on the
understanding that we should
have to reopen the question if,
contrary to expectation, 8 June
again became a possibility for
a state visit?

AJC.

4.12.57.

Ref. A06217

MR. ALEXANDER


Economic Summit 1982

I have seen Mr. Lyne's letter of 3rd December.

2. I do not know the considerations that have been in the minds of the French President in proposing the dates of 7th and 8th June for the Economic Summit in 1982, or why they are going for dates which precede the June meeting of the European Council. In particular, I do not know whether that is the result of inexperience in the new team in the Elysee, or represents some devious calculation by the French. One of the problems about next year's Summit is the representation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Community. Until now we have always been able to fix Economic Summits for dates when one of the four European participants was in the Presidency. We cannot do that next year, with the Belgians in the Presidency in the first six months and the Danes in the second six months. The French may calculate that, if they hold the Economic Summit before the June meeting of the European Council, it will be easier to avoid inviting the Prime Minister of Belgium to the Economic Summit: I know that they are keen not to have to do that.

3. I also know that the team in the Elysee are very keen to get the dates agreed. When they were here for the meeting of the European Council last week, they told me that our agreement was the only agreement still outstanding. I have checked with my American colleague, and what he tells me suggests that that is wishful thinking: the President has said that the dates are not ruled out, but he has not yet finally accepted them, and he is presumably looking at them in relation to his other travel plans.

4. We have so far said to the French that 8th June would be likely to be difficult for the Prime Minister, because of the probability of a State Visit beginning on that day. That possibility begins to look more remote. As Mr. Lyne's letter makes clear, we are proposing to the White House that President Reagan should visit London next year. If he accepts the invitation for the Economic Summit on 7th and 8th June, it is presumably not very likely that



he will visit Europe at any other time during the year; and, if he agrees to come on a visit to Britain and it is after the Economic Summit, he will not come to London until 9th June. If he does not come, and someone else - for instance King Juan Carlos - is invited for a State Visit, that visit could now take place the previous week (as The Queen's visit to Sweden has been cancelled); or it could take place in the week beginning 7th June but could start exceptionally on the Wednesday rather than on the Tuesday, thus in either case enabling the Prime Minister to attend an Economic Summit meeting at Versailles on 7th and 8th June.

5. I am content that the immediate reply to the French President should be on the lines suggested by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. A discussion by Personal Representatives on 12th and 13th December would give us a chance to probe French motives for choosing the dates they have chosen, and to find out how other countries thought about those dates. But I hope that, against the background of Mr. Lyne's letter and this minute, I should as a last resort have authority provisionally to accept the dates of 7th and 8th June as a basis for planning. The implication of this would be that we should accept some kind of responsibility to try so to arrange other matters that the Prime Minister was able to see the Summit through on those days.

6. I am sending a copy of this minute to Mr. Lyne.



ROBERT ARMSTRONG

4th December, 1981



Type for PRK
Signature *Paul*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 December 1981

Dear Michael,

mt

Economic Summit 1982

In your letter of 19 November, you sought advice about the dates proposed for the forthcoming Economic Summit in Paris.

The dates now proposed by President Mitterrand have certain practical implications for us. They also raise the wider issue of how these Economic Summits should fit into other international consultations. I treat this latter point first.

We favour the pattern of recent years where a European Council and the OECD's Annual Ministerial Meeting take place in the run-up to the Economic Summit. This timing gives other countries a sense of participation in the debate on world economic issues and is, no doubt, of some value to them presentationally.

As you know, the second European Council next year is set for 28/29 June. The dates for the OECD Ministerial Meeting are not yet firm but they normally fall in mid-June, in order to fit the timing of their economic forecasts. The French proposal of 7 and 8 June for the Economic Summit, thus pre-empts these two meetings (although the OECD are currently considering bringing forward their meeting to May).

It may be that the French have deliberately proposed these dates in order to minimise the preparatory process. Since they are the hosts we must leave it to them to shoulder the responsibility of coping with any adverse reactions. Nonetheless, the point may well entail discussion, at least in the European Community, if the smaller European countries misunderstand French intentions.

Although these considerations would suggest that dates in July would be preferable, other practical considerations at this end suggest that it may be politic to accept the dates proposed by the French. You will have seen a copy of Sir Michael Palliser's letter of 30 November to Washington instructing Sir Nicholas Henderson to explore with the Americans the possibility of President Reagan paying a State Visit to Britain next summer either before or after the Economic Summit. As you will have seen from that letter (and depending upon the additional complication of a possible State Visit by King Juan Carlos of Spain) it does look as if the easiest dates from The Queen's point of view would be a visit by President Reagan either in the first week of June, ie before the European Summit, or in the second week of June, ie after the Summit when the particular circumstances of an invitation to President Reagan would enable his visit to start in this country on Wednesday rather than the Tuesday.

/Since



Since it is unlikely that President Reagan will wish to cross the Atlantic twice within a month and providing that he agrees to a visit to this country, the probability is that we should clearly prefer the June dates. While we hope to hear further from Washington in the next week or so we are unlikely to have a clear decision about the Spanish State Visit until January.

/ In view of these uncertainties, we recommend a holding reply to President Mitterrand along the lines of the attached draft. This would allow the dates to be settled by Personal Representatives who could also consider the question of consultation with other Western partners.

I am sending copies of this letter and its enclosure to David Wright, Cabinet Office.

yours ever
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing St

11 12 1
2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9 10

1-5 DEC 1981