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Prime Minister

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PRIME MINISTER

RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

in Prime Minister's Office

Sir Robert Armstrong sent me a copy of the minute to you of 14 July. I have since seen the comments of the Chancellor in his minute of 16 July.

I recognise that the Cancun meeting which the Foreign Secretary is attending in August may raise issues which will need to be considered further by colleagues. But I would like to join the Chancellor in sounding a note of caution.

In some respects, Cancun may be the first meeting of its sort. But, in terms of the pressure we are under to soften our North/South line, it is only one of a series. We have had such meetings before - for example UNCTAD V, the Commonwealth Heads of Government; we have others this year, and we shall have more next (including possibly the biggest of all, the United Nations Global Negotiations). I do not see anything particularly different or compelling about the series of meetings this autumn. Our record overall is not that bad, as the defence of our position in Annex D to the report attached to Sir Robert Armstrong's minute shows. In our present straightened circumstances I do not believe we have anything to be ashamed of. We must not allow ourselves to waiver when we come under pressure at such occasions from the development lobby.

I am copying this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Chancellor, the Secretaries of State for Industry and Energy, the Minister of Agriculture and Sir Robert Armstrong.

WJB

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22 July 1981