

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

cc Mr Coles
Mr Fall
Mr Kerr
Mr Goulden

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WILLIAMSBURG - PRESS GUIDELINES

The proposed guidelines appear to be broadly similar to those for previous Summits though apparently more detailed and consequently potentially more rigid. Not all of them may be workable (see paras. 5 and 6).

I have the following comments:

Para 2

- We should nominate the Foreign Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and myself as official briefers; and Mr Goulden and myself as background briefers. But we need to retain the option of the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor (as at Versailles) giving background briefings if they so wish, given that our system of Government operates much more unattributably than others.

Para 3

- Important to get agreement, but a clear distinction must be drawn in our minds between agreement in the Summit on presentation and what is then actually said by briefers - eg. the French.

Para 4

- Similar to the rules which operated in Montebello (and which prevented the Prime Minister, though willing, from going on Canadian TV); we can accept, subject of course to any unforeseen need for the Prime Minister to have recourse to the media - eg a major crisis.

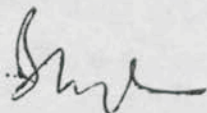
Para 5

- This is confusing and would preclude what happened in, for example, Montebello where European and other leaders virtually queued to give interviews before breakfast outside the local presbytery which had been converted by the 3 US networks into a studio. (The priest, it was said, had been sent away on holiday). If this paragraph means that participating Ministers and Ministerial official briefers should only give press conferences (which would be recorded and televised)

and eschew any additional interviews, it should say so clearly. Left as it is/^{it}will be a source of considerable irritation and difficulty because it could be interpreted as reducing the service which the media have come to expect. If that service is to be reduced, we should be clear we are in fact so doing. We could live with a reduced service, subject to the proviso about a need to react to crises, but I doubt whether this self-denying ordinance will be observed by Ministers of other countries - eg. the USA - who virtually live on TV.

Para 6

- We shall need to be free to give the background briefings on May 28; we simply cannot accept the restriction of starting on Sunday morning (May 29). Otherwise, we can accept, subject to my reservations on paras 2, 5 and 6, and the general proviso that Heads of State and Government must be free at all times to react to crises.



B. INGHAM

10 February 1983

Ref: A083/0458

MR. INGHAM

Economic Summit - Williamsburg

The American Personal Representative has sent me the attached letter proposing a set of guidelines for contacts with the Press during the Williamsburg Summit.

2. I should be very grateful for your comments and suggestions as to how I should reply.

3. I am sending copies of the letter and minute to Mr. Coles, Mr. Fall and Mr. Kerr.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Robert Armstrong

8th February 1983

Mr. Ingham

I should be grateful for a
file of your recommendations
to the S.R.

A. J. C. 107
/ 2.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Robert:

1 I am outlining for your consideration the following standard, coordinated policy for contacts with the press during the Williamsburg Summit. These guidelines are in keeping with our discussion at La Celle-St. Cloud.

GENERAL GROUND RULES

2 -- Each participating delegation would designate two Ministers and a press spokesman as official briefers and two background briefers as the only briefers during the Summit. Each country would have a separate briefing room.

3 -- Before the conclusion of each session, which involves Heads of State or Government, the participants would agree on how they would represent their discussion to the press.

4 -- Heads of State and Government would agree not to give any press interviews (TV, radio or print) from the time of arrival at Williamsburg until after the concluding press gathering, when the President of the United States will read a joint statement (see below).

5 -- Participating Ministers would also agree not to give any press interviews from the time of arrival at Williamsburg until after the final joint press statement, except in connection with scheduled official briefings (as indicated below). (Ministers could pre-tape interviews before arrival at Williamsburg.)

PROPOSED BRIEFING SCHEDULE

- 6 May 28 - Non-substantive (e.g., logistics, etc.) briefings by press spokesman to conclude before 9:00 p.m.
- May 29 - Briefing by Secretary Shultz or Regan, following the morning session, on the basis of common guidance agreed to at the end of the session.

Individual country briefings following the afternoon session by Ministers or press spokesman, on the basis of common guidance agreed to at the end of the session.

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May 30 - Joint press statement as agreed by all Heads to be read by the President of the United States after the conclusion of the final Summit session.

Individual country briefings after the joint press statement by Heads of State or Government, Ministers or others.

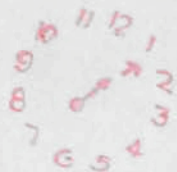
- 7 Background briefers are free to brief at any time, beginning Sunday morning.
- 8 We are also planning for Secretary Shultz to give a press briefing in mid-February, at which he will discuss the type of Summit we are preparing for Williamsburg. He will emphasize the general themes we agreed upon at La Celle-St. Cloud -- an informal Summit with smaller sessions and no formal communique. He will note, in particular, that the President has been in contact with the other leaders and they have unanimously agreed to these themes. We will send you a transcript of the briefing as soon as it is held.
- 9 I look forward to your comments on the press guidelines.

Sincerely yours,

Allen

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- 9 FEB 1983





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

A.S.C. 14/2

Dear Robert,

Economic Summit - Williamsburg

Thank you for sending me a copy of your minute of 8 February to Bernard Ingham. The FCO News Department will liaise with Bernard Ingham so that he can let you have a coordinated set of comments.

We notice that in the penultimate paragraph of his message Allen Wallis appears to assume that everyone agrees that there should not be a formal communiqué. This is perhaps a point which you will wish to take up with him.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of your minute.

Yours ever
Z


(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

Sir Robert Armstrong KCB CVO
Cabinet Office
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LONDON SW1A 2AS

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M. MATFIELD

cc Mr Coles 
Mr Fall
Mr Goulden
Miss Wallace o/r

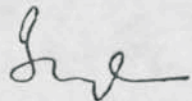
WILLIAMSBURG ADVICE

As promised I have now co-ordinated a line on the contentious point under the heading of Paragraph 5 of my minute to Sir Robert of February 10.

I agree with FCO that our advice on this paragraph should reach the following conclusion:

Against this background, we consider that there should again be no interview restrictions on participating Ministers (as distinct from Heads of State or Government, subject in these cases to a proviso about the need to react to crises).

The question of whether there is to be a formal communiqué is of course a policy decision. If however there is not to be a formal communiqué we need to prepare media opinion in advance. Otherwise the lack of a communiqué could become an issue in itself.



B. INGHAM
8 March 1983