

Prime Minister
 Agree message to President Reagan?

A.S.C. 1/2.

Ref. A083/0519

MR COLES

Preparations for the Williamsburg Summit

With your minute of 31 January you sent me a copy of a message which the Prime Minister had received from President Reagan on the economic content of the Williamsburg Summit.

2. With your minute of 9 February you asked for advice about how we should react to indications from Monsieur Cheysson that President Mitterrand might be preparing a series of proposals for the Williamsburg Summit, based on discussions with a group of Socialist Heads of Government.

3. On President Reagan's message, I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Treasury. The President's proposals are perfectly acceptable to us as a framework for the discussion, which can be carried forward and sharpened in focus by Personal Representatives at their next meeting from 16-18 March, and as the Summit date approaches.

4. On this all that is called for is a brief welcoming reply.

5. I suggest that we might add to the reply a paragraph drawing attention to the risk that exaggerated expectations will be built up about the significance of the Summit, which will make it more difficult to have the kind of relaxed and informal discussion which both the Prime Minister and the President want.

--- 6. I attach a draft reply to the President on these lines.

7. As to what Monsieur Cheysson said about President Mitterrand's intentions, I think that we should wait for firmer and more detailed information before we decide to produce a paper ourselves. I should be able to discover from President Mitterrand's Personal Representative at the next meeting of Personal Representatives whether his President has intentions of the kind attributed to him, and, if so, what his proposals are likely to say. There will be time enough after that to consider whether a "counter paper" should be circulated, and, if so, whether we should take responsibility for it. It might be better

Cheysson may well have misrepresented French intentions. A.S.C. 1/2.



to concert a response with - for instance - the Americans or the Germans (or both); or indeed it might be tactically better to leave it to somebody else to make the running, given that we may be arguing with the French about other matters at about the time of the Williamsburg Summit.

Reagan may not want any papers and may wish to try to dissuade the French.
A.T.C. 1/2

8. If the Prime Minister is content, I will report back to her after the next meeting of Personal Representatives, and submit further advice.

9. In the meantime we are putting in hand the preparation of briefs for the next meeting of Personal Representatives, so that we are equipped with answers on each of the nine questions in the President's examination paper. I should like to submit the answers to the Prime Minister before the meeting, so that I am up to date with her basic approach towards these topics.

10. I am sending copies of this minute and the draft to Mr Fall, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Mr Kerr, Treasury.

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

11 February 1983



SSN: 0441.

Misc: 55
DIG 141030Z
immediate

DRAFT MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON DC

Dear Ron

Thank you for your message of 28 January about the economic content of the Williamsburg Summit.

I am entirely content with the approach which you propose on this. My Personal Representative will come to the next meeting of Personal Representatives equipped to represent my thoughts and views on the topics you have suggested, and on how we should handle the discussion of them.

I hope that we are going to be able to stick to the general ideas on which we are both agreed about the format of the Summit at Williamsburg. Despite all that has been said, I clearly see signs of a tendency in the world's media to build up the significance of our meeting, in the context of the series of international meetings that lie ahead of us beginning with last week's meeting of the IMF Interim Committee, and thus to generate expectations which we shall then be expected to live up to, or be regarded as having failed if we do not live up to them. This could be a real problem for us.

On a different subject, George Bush will have told you of our talk on 9 February. It was very good to have him here, and I hope that he found our discussion as valuable and as encouraging as I did.

His loan was

a great success.

WITH BEST WISHES

A.J.C. 14/2

YOURS TRULY MARGARET



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Preparations for the Williamsburg Summit

The Prime Minister has seen your minute of 11 February.

She has approved the draft reply to President Reagan's message of 28 January, with the addition at the end of the words "His tour was a great success". I have arranged for the despatch of the message.

As regards Monsieur Cheysson's report of President Mitterrand's intentions, the Prime Minister agrees with your proposals for handling this matter and will await a further report from you, following the next meeting of Personal Representatives.

I am copying this minute to Brian Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and John Kerr (H.M. Treasury).

A. J. COLES

14 February, 1983