



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR. HATFIELD
CABINET OFFICE

Versailles Working Group Report on Technology, Growth and Employment

The Prime Minister has now seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 24 February enclosing the final Report of the Versailles Working Group on Technology, Growth and Employment. Mrs. Thatcher has agreed that, as proposed, the Report should be published as a Command Paper which she will present to Parliament on the same day as the Report is published in other countries. I assume that when a publication date is known you will provide a draft Arranged Question and Answer.

Timothy Flesher

28 February 1983

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PRIME MINISTER

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Prime Minister

Do you agree to present this report
soon to Parliament as a Command Paper?

Yes

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A.S.C. 25/2

Versailles Working Group Report on Technology,
Growth and Technology

The final Report of the Versailles Working Group has now been sent to you by President Mitterrand. It does not differ in content to the draft which was attached to Dr. Nicholson's minute of 14th January.

2. In his letter, President Mitterrand requests your views on the follow-up to the Report and also on its publication. The question of publication is urgent, because the French would like to publish the Report as soon as possible if all countries agree. In the meetings of the Group Dr. Nicholson has been arguing that the report should not be published until Heads of State or Government have received it and considered it at Williamsburg. None the less, my advice would be to agree to the early publication of the Report. Most other countries will do so; and, if we withhold agreement, the French will almost certainly leak it. There is a respectable reason for wanting early publication: to generate maximum interest in the Report and hence in the role of technology in the world today. The French Government - and no doubt President Mitterrand himself - feel that, if the Report is published at the same time as the Williamsburg Summit, it will receive less attention. It results, of course, from a Mitterrand initiative.

3. If you agree, the Report should be published as a Command paper, presented by you to Parliament on the same day as publication of the Report in other countries. It is right for you to present it both because the Report is the result of an action decided on by Heads of State and Government at the Economic Summit and because you have responsibility for scientific and technological issues which straddle several Departments, as was restated in the White Paper giving the Government response to the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology last year.

RIA

Robert Armstrong

24th February 1983