

22AKQ



cc: PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

VENICE ECONOMIC SUMMIT: POLITICAL ISSUES

Your minute of 18 May dealt with the handling of political issues at the Venice Economic Summit.

The Prime Minister remains decidedly unenthusiastic about the proposed declaration on East/West relations. She does not think a declaration necessary. She finds the contingency draft discussed by the Sherpas pallid. She comments that it does not sound as though the Seven are a real alliance. In a technical sense of course they are not. But the only purpose of a declaration would be to portray them as absolutely united on key issues. The Prime Minister also attaches importance to including a sentence in the declaration (if there is to be one) on the continuing role of nuclear weapons in our defence. This might be done by adding, at an appropriate point in paragraph 6: "At the same time, we recognise that nuclear weapons will continue to have an important role in preserving peace".

The Prime Minister is, on the other hand, well content with the draft text on terrorism.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary.

Charles Powell

20 May 1987

287