

E.R.
CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

CABINET: VISIT TO NATO

You may like to say a word about your visit to NATO.

You visited NATO to see Lord Carrington and address the North Atlantic Council and then went on to SHAPE with General Galvin.

Your purpose was to give a bit of a boost to NATO, particularly ahead of the forthcoming Summit.

It is important that the Summit should be a success, particularly in a US Presidential election year. But there are disturbing signs of weakness on the part of the smaller NATO states and indeed of the Germans. It will be difficult to get a sufficiently robust statement, reasserting the doctrine of nuclear deterrence. They do not even want to refer to the need for modernisation of NATO's nuclear weapons. The real problem is that they are not frightened any more: the new-look Soviet diplomacy is having its effect.

In general you were not very impressed. The NATO Council has an air of torpor. We shall have to work hard to get a good result from the Summit: but we must get it.

CDP

CHARLES POWELL

17 February 1988

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