

Prime Minister.

Agree that we should not change
our plans and that we should leave it to
the police to control the demonstration as
they propose? Yes A.S.C. 24/5.

Ref. A084/1533

MR COLES ✓

London Economic Summit: Security

The decision to hold the Economic Summit in London was always recognised as carrying with it the risk that it would be a tempting focus for demonstrations by protest groups of various kinds.

2. It was to be expected that CND could hardly pass up the opportunity of a demonstration directed against President Reagan and some of the other Summit leaders.
3. CND have now advertised a large demonstration for Saturday 9 June, the demonstration to start in Hyde Park at about 1.30 pm and reach Trafalgar Square from 2.30 to 3.00 pm.
4. The demonstration will be routed from Hyde Park via Grosvenor Gardens, Victoria Street, Parliament Square and Whitehall. It will not therefore directly pass Lancaster House. Some fringe groups may try to reach Lancaster House, but the police are confident that they can hold them.
5. But the fact that the demonstration is to end up in Trafalgar Square will create complications for the move from Lancaster House to Guildhall for the final ceremony. That ceremony is going to require the transport of officials, Ministers and Heads of Government from Lancaster House to Guildhall just when the demonstration is arriving in Trafalgar Square. Trafalgar Square is of course on the direct route from Lancaster House to Guildhall.
6. The police have asked whether we could find any other venue for the press statement. I am advised that it would now be impossible to change the Summit venues. We could not make adequate facilities available in a comparable building (even if one was available) in the time.
7. We have suggested that the police should try to confine the demonstration to Hyde Park. They take the line that to ban the

CND demonstration, or to prevent it from reaching its traditional goal of Trafalgar Square, would create more public order problems than it would solve. The police could not control hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, if they were to decide to take the law into their own hands. It would be better to let the march and demonstrations proceed, and seek to control them, working in conjunction with the CND leaders. The police would propose to keep open routes from Lancaster House to Guildhall going north of Trafalgar Square - for example, via Saint James's Street, Piccadilly, Shaftesbury Avenue, Oxford Street and New Oxford Street. There are plenty of alternatives for routes in this area. They expect to be able to keep crowds well away from Lancaster House.

8. In my view, we have to accept the judgment of the police in this matter. It is for the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis to decide whether to seek approval for a ban on a march, and for the reasons I have indicated he is not minded to do so. I believe that in the end the best results are likely to come from trusting the professional judgment of the police and letting them get on with it.

9. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Home Secretary.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

22 May 1984