



Econ. Pol. da

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Economic Summit 1984

Thank you for your minute of 18 July. Provided the proposed dates of 8-10 June, 1984 are convenient for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Prime Minister is content that you should now seek to establish whether those dates are acceptable to the Heads of State and Government who will be attending the Summit.

I am copying this minute to Brian Fall (FCO) and John Kerr (HM Treasury).

A. J. COLES

20 July 1983

SJ

Prime Minister

①

Agree?

Ref. A083/2125

MR COLLS ✓

Yes - have we  
cleared it  
with the  
Chancellor  
and P.S.  
A.S.C. 12/7

Economic Summit 1984

Thank you for your minute of 14 July  
about the venue for the Economic Summit 1984.  
I will report in due course how proceedings in  
London might be arranged.

2. Is it acceptable to the Prime Minister  
that I should now communicate with my fellow  
Personal Representatives to find out whether  
the dates 8-10 June would be acceptable to  
her colleagues?

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

18 July 1983

ELON Post London Summit

Pt 12



ELON  
N.C.  
LONDON

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Economic Summit 1984

The Prime Minister has considered your minute of 11 July in which you describe the results of the investigation of possible sites outside London for the Economic Summit in 1984 and recommend that Gleneagles be chosen.

The Prime Minister is grateful for the work which has been done on this question but has reached the view that it will be best to hold the Summit in London. Her conclusion has been influenced partly by consideration of cost, as well as the desirability of setting a rather simpler style for the Summit than would be possible at Gleneagles.

Mrs. Thatcher would be grateful if you could suggest in due course how the proceedings in London might be arranged. She has said that if it is necessary to carry out any improvements to or refurbishment of e.g. Lancaster House, she would be prepared to consider this since the expense might be justifiable in view of the fact that we would continue to use the facilities concerned.

The Prime Minister would wish in due course to advise the Palace on the role which Her Majesty The Queen might be asked to play. For your own information, she hopes that The Queen will be able to offer dinner at Windsor rather than Buckingham Palace.

/The Prime Minister

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The Prime Minister would also like some thought to be given to the possibility of one of the meals being arranged at Greenwich.

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

14 July 1983

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PRIME MINISTER

Economic Summit 1984

I attach a minute from Sir Robert Armstrong recommending  
Gleneagles as the venue. *NO*

In considering this you may wish to reflect on two points:

(a) Gleneagles would tend to continue the rather grand style of recent Summits. The question arises of whether we should try to set a simpler style - the British press could well be looking for critical stories at the time of our Summit.

(b) Although I asked the Cabinet Office in early June for advice on the cost of the alternatives, this minute tells us only that Gleneagles is likely to be the most expensive. It will be surprising if there are no Parliamentary Questions about the cost. I wonder whether, before taking a decision, you should not receive at least a broad estimate of the likely costs.

I attach a letter from Lord Geoffrey-Lloyd which advocates Leeds Castle as the venue and which I promised to put before you when you received advice on this matter.

*dim. W. ...*

*ASL*

12 July 1983

Ref.A083/2032

PRIME MINISTER

By Mr <sup>(Scholar)</sup> Scholar's minute of 3 June you agreed that we should give more thought to the possibility of sites for the Economic Summit 1984 outside London.

2. Detailed studies have now been completed. As a result Bath and Greenwich have been excluded. There remain four possible sites (apart from London): Edinburgh, Gleneagles, Harrogate, and a combination of Leeds Castle and Chevening.

3. If Edinburgh were chosen, the Castle could be used for the conference meetings; there is hotel accommodation adequate both in quantity and quality; and Meadowbank Stadium would make a satisfactory press centre. The Queen would give a dinner in Holyroodhouse. The main problems are transport between buildings and the consequent dislocation of traffic, and security. The cost of holding the Summit in Edinburgh would be comparable with holding it in London.

4. Harrogate has, I think, to be excluded. Though costs would be reasonable, there is no obvious place for the meetings in the city (there is a conference centre which would make an ideal press centre), and a site outside Harrogate for the meetings (eg Harewood House or Castle Howard) would add to costs, and to transport and security problems. It would not be possible for The Queen to give a state dinner.

5. A combination of Leeds Castle and Chevening is a strong possibility. Heads of State or Government and Finance Ministers could be housed and the conference meetings could take place at Leeds Castle, which has ample facilities for meetings and for meals, and provides a good environment for relaxed informal discussions and for bilaterals. Foreign Ministers could be housed at Chevening and flown over by helicopter to Leeds Castle for meetings. There is a hotel just outside Leeds Castle which would provide adequate though not very attractive accommodation for delegations; some senior officials might have to be housed further afield. Ministers could be



helicoptered to London or Windsor for a dinner given by The Queen. The main problem would be the press. There is no large press centre available. Options would be portacabins and tents on the car park at Leeds Castle, a local school or a former RAF base at West Malling, 10 miles away, which would need substantial renovation. This option would be good for security and (apart from the press centre) for cost; but there would be a good deal of to-ing and fro-ing between Leeds Castle and Chevening, and the supporting accommodation is less than ideal. In particular the press would probably be mainly based in London.

6. Gleneagles would provide an opportunity for the principals and the delegations to meet under one roof with the maximum privacy and scope for bilaterals. It has been used before for high level international meetings (Commonwealth Prime Ministers in 1977, the NATO Ministerial Meeting in 1981). Accommodation to the highest standard is available for Heads of State or Government. There are plenty of rooms for meetings. The site would be ideal for security. A press centre could be established at the University of Stirling, 20 minutes away by road. The journalists would be able to stay in hotels in Stirling, Crieff, Dunblane, Perth and Edinburgh. The Queen would give a State Dinner at Holyroodhouse, 25 minutes away by helicopter: the evening might include Beating the Retreat in the courtyard. If you wanted, you could no doubt entertain the Ministerial guests at the Palace of Scone, the home of Lord Mansfield. Gleneagles would be much more expensive than Leeds Castle/Chevening (though the greater cost of the hotel would be partly offset by the fact that less would have to be spent on the press centre); but the setting is splendid, and the amenities ideal. The hotel was handed over to private management (it used to belong to British Rail) in 1981; the management are lively and go-ahead, and have already made considerable improvements in the hotel. There is no doubt that they are very keen to have the Economic Summit, no doubt for the prestige and publicity it would bring, and it should be possible to negotiate a reasonable deal with them.



7. Though it has not yet been possible to make precise costings, there is no doubt that Gleneagles could be the most expensive of the four options, but in many respects it would also be the best: a grand setting, very good amenities, excellent for security, reasonably accessible for international travel and good for relaxed and informal discussions away from the press. It would enable us to establish a pattern of activity much more like that at Montebello than that at Versailles or Williamsburg.

#### Conclusion

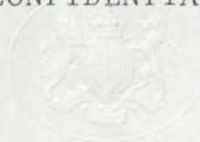
8. The best options for holding the Summit outside London are Gleneagles and Leeds Castle/Chevening. Gleneagles would be more expensive, perhaps by a considerable margin; but it is a nearly ideal location, and carries the advantage of having all the principals and the delegations under one roof, and thus avoiding the transport and security problems of shuttling between Leeds Castle and Chevening.

9. It is now a matter of urgency to make a decision on the venue and on the dates, since the hotels concerned - wherever they are - need to make the bookings.

10. I recommend that you decide in favour of Gleneagles.

11. The dates provisionally chosen are 8 to 10 June 1984. That is one week before the European elections (I cannot see that that matters, but some of our European partners may take a different view); it would not clash with the European Council, which the French Government are planning to hold in France in the second half of the month after the European elections. The Queen would be free and willing to give a State Dinner on Saturday 9 June (or perhaps on Sunday 10 June after the conclusion of the conference, if that were preferred).

12. Once the venue and date are agreed, I will communicate with Personal Representatives to ask whether the dates would be acceptable to other participants.



13. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

11 July 1983