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*ajc*

Ref. A084/1109

MR COLES ✓

*see letter to F/C.O. M 13/4.*

Economic Summit: Australian Participation

In your minute of 29 March you asked for a draft reply to Mr Hawke's letter to the Prime Minister on this subject.

2. I recommend that the Prime Minister should not send any reply. Mr Hawke's letter was itself a reply to the Prime Minister's letter. I read Mr Hawke's letter as accepting that he is not going to be invited to the London Economic Summit, but keeping his hat in the ring for future years. On the assumption that Germany chairs next year's Summit, it will be for the Federal Chancellor to take the lead in deciding whether Australia should be invited next year. If he does not weaken, it seems very likely that the Japanese Prime Minister in 1986 will find the argument for greater Pacific representation irresistible. So it is probably only a matter of time. In the meantime I do not see how the Prime Minister can assure Mr Hawke that he "can rely on Britain's continuing support" in pressing the case for Australian participation. All things considered, it seems best not to engage in further dialogue on the subject.

*with KJ*

3. We shall have, however, to decide how we give effect to the Prime Minister's wish, expressed in her message to Mr Hawke, to have an opportunity of knowing his views, before the Summit, on the world economic prospect and on what impetus he would like to see the Summit give to the direction of events. As the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has indicated (his Private Secretary's letter of 6 April), last year the Americans sent a special emissary to Australia after the Summit; and Mr Hawke was in Washington shortly before the Summit, and saw the President himself. The United States Personal Representative has already been to Australia earlier this year, and has met Mr Hawke. I saw Mr Hawke in December, when I was in Australia, but we had very little discussion about the Summit, and I do not think that Mr Hawke would regard that visit as in itself enough.

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4. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has suggested that the Prime Minister should send out a senior official acting as a personal emissary before the Summit, and hopes that I might take this on. If instructed to do so, of course I will, though I cannot pretend that it would be welcome to have to fit a visit to Australia into the timetable in advance of the Summit. Mr Littler also has a heavy programme of international meetings in the coming weeks; I do not know whether Sir Crispin Tickell would find it easier to fit in a visit to Australia.

5. If on the other hand the Prime Minister shares the Chancellor of the Exchequer's view that a special emissary to Canberra would be an excessive response, an alternative possibility might be to send out the draft "thematic paper", which is now being revised in the light of discussion at last weekend's meeting of Personal Representatives, and to invite the British High Commissioner in Canberra to show it on a personal basis to Mr Hawke and invite his comments on it. That paper would give Mr Hawke a clear idea of the way in which preparations for the Summit would go and of the issues that were likely to predominate at the Summit; and seeing it would give him a chance to comment upon it and inject his own ideas and thoughts into the Prime Minister's mind before the Summit.

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

RTA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

9 April 1984

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