



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Press Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

ECONOMIC SUMMIT

I have seen Nicholas Barrington's minute to you on the latest US representations and I would like to reinforce some of his points or add to them:

1. We recognised at the outset that this would be an electioneering Summit: US presidential; EuroAssembly; consequently, we have made media arrangements with that additional pressure clearly in mind.
2. Against that background, we have sought to reconcile the participants' requirements and the insatiable demands of the media with the Prime Minister's desire for a relaxed and workmanlike Summit.
3. I have personally assured the US Embassy here and the President's Summit media representative that I will do what I can within reason to help President Reagan get good press and television coverage; but I have emphasised the need to maintain some kind of priority to avoid rows and to allow us to manipulate the numbers available - eg by using the European Community's entitlement which is unlikely to be taken up - to their advantage.

In the light of all this I take particularly strong exception to the latest demands. They are, not to put too fine a point on it, outrageous, and what is more, ineptly handled. Mr Streater is somewhat uncharacteristically trying to bounce us.

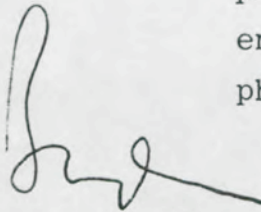
There is, of course, nothing unique about the White House Press Corps except that they demand the earth and quite wrongly usually get it. There is no reason why they should get it in London. When in Rome.....

But there is every reason why we should do our best to help, on the two points of substance - more writing press in pools and photopool numbers - consistent with ensuring satisfaction all round. That we shall try to do, and the best advice you could give the Americans at this stage is to stop trying to bounce us because it is counter-productive; to rely on us to help as best we can; and to stop creating a fuss - otherwise we shall have trouble with other delegations.

I would be grateful if you would make the following points to the Prime Minister:

- The last thing the Prime Minister wants are allegations that the Summit has been stage managed by her for the re-election of President Reagan; that is a risk we cannot ignore.
- We are bending every effort to help the Americans as much as possible without causing trouble with other countries; we can resolve their points by discussion.
- We should be instructed to resolve the problem by negotiation, consistent with the achievement of all round satisfaction by the countries involved.
- The Prime Minister should not get involved in this detail and should make clear her support for our general approach.
- I consider it asking far too much of the Prime Minister and participants to set aside up to 16 minutes for the media at Lancaster House photocalls. Eight minutes - ie two waves - is enough. But I think we could permit 2 waves of photopool for the group photo in No 10.

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BERNARD INGHAM
17 May 1984