

Ref. A04792

MR ALEXANDER

*Yes - but this is not a head of gov. (1)*  
*Pmie Minister*  
*Are you content to leave it to others to make the running on the question of whether or not Mr. Thorn should be at the dinner on the first evening of the Ottawa Summit?*  
Ottawa Economic Summit

*Ans 30/4*

In the margins of last week's meeting of Personal Representatives, the Canadian Personal Representative told me that Monsieur Gaston Thorn, the President of the European Commission, had approached Mr Trudeau, as the Chairman of the Summit, about his attendance at the proposed dinner for Heads of State or Government only on the evening of Sunday 19 July. According to Mr Gotlieb, Monsieur Thorn had said to Mr Trudeau that, if at the dinner the leaders were going to discuss the management of the meeting, then he ought to be there. If, on the other hand, they were going to use the dinner on the Sunday evening purely for a general political discussion, then he would accept that he need not be there.

2. Mr Gotlieb's first instinct was to think it likely that the Heads of State or Government would want to discuss the management of the meeting, and that Monsieur Thorn should be invited to the dinner. I warned him that there was a good deal of history to this question. Mr Roy Jenkins had fought and won a battle to be represented throughout the proceedings of the Summit, including at the dinner for Heads of State or Government only, against the opposition of the President of the French Republic, Monsieur Giscard d'Estaing. It looked to me as if Monsieur Thorn was expecting that this issue might come up again with the change in commissionership, and might be afraid that, if the battle had to be fought again, he would not win it, and was therefore preparing for himself an honourable way out.

3. I said that I did not know whether other Heads of State or Government would want to make an issue of this matter on this occasion. It might be that President Giscard d'Estaing (if he was re-elected) would want to do so; even if he did not, someone else - perhaps the Federal Chancellor - might want to do so.



I did not know what the Prime Minister's position would be, but I thought that she might well be fairly neutral, and might not want to press either for his inclusion or for his exclusion from the dinner. I suggested to Mr Gotlieb that this was not a matter to be raised at the table during the meeting of Personal Representatives, but that he might raise it privately with the French and German Personal Representatives, as he had raised it with me. Mr Gotlieb said that he thought that this was a matter which the European Community leaders represented at the Summit would have to settle among themselves; the non-European leaders would probably settle for whatever their European colleagues were agreed upon.

4. Finally, I said to Mr Gotlieb that it seemed to me very likely that the Heads of State or Government would want to use the dinner on Sunday 19 July for a wide-ranging political discussion, particularly as it would be President Reagan's first Summit. It might be prudent for Mr Trudeau to think in terms of not discussing the management of the Summit meeting at the dinner on the Sunday evening, but to keep that discussion for the opening session of the meeting on the Monday morning: it had already been proposed by Mr Trudeau, and the Prime Minister was content, that Heads of State or Government should start on their own on the Monday morning with a discussion of the management of the business.

5. I am sending a copy of this minute to Mr Walden.

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

30 April 1981



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

OTTAWA ECONOMIC SUMMIT

The Prime Minister has seen your minute to me of 30 April on this subject. She has no strong views on the points raised in it and is content to leave it to others to make the running. But she has noted that M. Thorn is not a Head of Government.

I am sending a copy of this minute to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

1 May 1981

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