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PRIME MINISTER

CABINET : NATO SUMMIT

You may like to report briefly on the NATO Summit (there has not been a Cabinet since).

The Summit was our idea and it paid off. NATO had been looking rather ragged in the face of Gorbachev's arms control initiatives, with a tendency on the part of some NATO members - most worryingly the Germans - to downplay the Soviet military threat.

The Summit was a chance to remind them of the reality of Soviet military might and the constant modernisation of Soviet weaponry in every field. We secured two resolute statements from the Summit reaffirming NATO's basic strategy, reiterating the support of the sixteen NATO governments for nuclear deterrence, and explicitly recognising the need to keep all NATO's weapons including its nuclear weapons up to date. There will no doubt be some foot-dragging when specific decisions on modernisation have to be taken. But there is now a clear political steer from the Summit which is what General Galvin wanted. There was also an impressive and rather moving restatement of America's commitment to the Alliance by President Reagan.

The subsequent Parliamentary statement was a very useful chance to draw attention to the Opposition's complete isolation in Europe on defence issues.

C.D.?

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