

Ref: B05354

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

c Mr Whitmore

Prime Minister's Visit to Washington

Sir Michael Palliser, with whom I had a word in the margins of another meeting this morning, says that his letter to you of 22nd November deliberately omitted from the visit's agenda any mention of the Polaris replacement issue. He thought this issue too delicate to mention in such a letter but agrees that, in terms of demands on the Prime Minister's 105 minutes with the President, it will in fact be the most important bilateral issue (ahead of arms for the RUC, to which the letter gives pride of place); and that though the President may not be too difficult on its substance, he will need careful pinning down on timing, procedure and presentation.

2. Sir Michael Palliser also agrees that the Cabinet Office should co-ordinate the brief on this subject. I am in touch with the Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office on what will need to be included.

R. L. WADE-GERY

26th November 1979

R L WADE-GERY