

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO WASHINGTON: BRIEFING MEETING: 14 FEBRUARY

We have set aside just over an hour for a briefing meeting tomorrow. This is intended to cover non-arms control issues (you have already had a seminar on this: fresh material is being prepared).

You will not have time to read the briefs now, but there will be time on the plane and an opportunity to discuss them with the Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary. Most of the issues are familiar.

I suggest that you use tomorrow's meeting to focus on trade, economic and financial issues, Laker and Ireland.

① You might take Laker first since Mr. Ridley has to leave. How much prominence do we wish to give this issue? Are there specific points to make to President Reagan? Should it be raised at the Economic Roundtable discussions? Should anything be said to Congress?

② You might take the US economy next. You will want to focus on a few key points with the President: what are they? (budget deficit, concerted intervention, effect of US policies on other countries?). What more general points should you make at the Economic Roundtable? How should you handle the economic issues with Congress, so as not to alienate the Administration?

Trade issues and protectionism will follow from this. It is something on which you will wish to press both Administration and Congress hard. How far should you deal publicly with the possibility of an import surcharge? How forthcoming can you be about a new GATT round (given foot-draggers in the EC)?

On defence issues its mainly a question of what points

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You might like to have these briefs over the week-end. Briefing meeting set for Tuesday. EDD



you can best make to Congress , on US troops in Europe, on European co-operation (i.e. WEU) and on procurement.

Finally you could raise the line you should take on Northern Ireland: which is likely to feature in a big way with Congress.

Two final and more general points which might be discussed are:

1. what points do we want to focus on in your Departure statement at the White House?

2. what are the main themes we want to get out to the press as a result of the visit? (As opposed to the December visit, the emphasis might best be on economic issues and particularly the external impact of US policies rather than on the Strategic Defence Initiative).

C.D.P.

13 February, 1985