



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

The Government's Response to the Reports of the Select
Committee on Defence and on Westland

We discussed briefly last week the handling of the Government's response to these two reports. You agreed to arrange for the relevant Departments to put in hand the arrangements for the drafting of the Government's responses to both reports. Simply for planning purposes, Departments should work on the assumption of publication of response(s) by the end of September.

BF || I should also be glad if you, in consultation with the Business Managers, could let the Prime Minister have advice, say at the end of August, on the tactics for handling the Government's response in Parliament. Your advice should include the following issues: should there be one White Paper combining into one document the Government's response to the two reports or two separate White Papers; which Ministers should present the response to Parliament; when should this be done; should the Government pre-empt Opposition demands for a debate by giving time for one debate (presumably on the response to both reports at the same time) and if so, when; who should speak in the debate?

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Private Secretaries of the Lord President, Lord Privy Seal and Chief Whip.

N.L.W.

N.L. WICKS

28 July 1986