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Defence 17
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MO 13/1/34

This is a confirmation of what you agreed with Sir P. Hunt this morning

Prime Minister

Am 20/9

PRIME MINISTER

UNITED STATES GROUND LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

At yesterday's MISC 7 consideration of long range theatre nuclear forces (LRTNF) - my minute to you of 17th September - we discussed the United States request that we should accept an extra flight of 16 GLCMs in the United Kingdom - bringing the proposed total to 160 - in order to help remove a difficulty with the Germans; and you gave me discretion to acquiesce in this if need be at whatever I judged the most productive time.

M.V.
2. I have now been able to consider the matter urgently. It appears to me that our interests are best served by giving agreement forthwith. In practice, what we can hope to gain by the concession is essentially goodwill (the US must know that it cannot be a particularly high-cost move for us). We therefore need to choose the timing to secure the maximum benefit from the concession. It is clear from a second plea which, I understand, came to the Cabinet Office from Mr Aaron of the National Security Council late yesterday that, in American judgement, a quick answer would relieve them of significant difficulties which even a short delay would create.

A need out.
3. I thought I should tell you immediately that I am accordingly sending personal messages to Dr Brown and Herr Apel telling them that although GLCM deployment is not without domestic difficulties for us we are prepared to accept an extra flight on the understanding that this will enable the Federal Republic to join us in firm support for a collective Alliance decision this year in favour of the US deployment plan as adjusted.

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2.

I am sending copies of this minute to our MISC 7 colleagues and to Sir John Hunt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J.H.", with a horizontal line underneath.

20th September 1979

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