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FM FCO 101100Z OCT 83
TO FLASH BONN
TELEGRAM NUMBER 501 OF 10 OCTOBER
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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 149/83

1. PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO CHANCELLOR KOHL URGENTLY, THE BACKGROUND TO WHICH YOU WILL KNOW FROM ORAL DISCUSSIONS LAST WEEK.

BEGINS

DEAR HERR CHANCELLOR

I UNDERSTAND FROM MICHAEL HESELTINE THAT MANFRED WOERNER AND HE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING YOUR CONCERN THAT THE DELIVERY OF CRUISE MISSILES TO BRITAIN AT THE BEGINNING OF NOVEMBER IS LIABLE TO BE USED BY OPPONENTS OF DEPLOYMENT TO EMBARRASS YOU IN THE FORTH-COMING BUNDESTAG DEBATE. MICHAEL HESELTINE HAS PASSED ON TO ME YOUR SUGGESTION THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DELAY THE ARRIVAL OF THE EQUIPMENT HERE UNTIL AFTER THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE HAS TAKEN PLACE. CAP WEINBERGER HAS ALSO BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIM ABOUT THIS.

I HAVE GIVEN YOUR SUGGESTION VERY CAREFUL THOUGHT, AND I HAVE ALSO HAD A MESSAGE ABOUT IT FROM RONALD REAGAN. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE TESTING PERIOD WHICH YOUR GOVERNMENT FACES OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND I KNOW HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR ALL OF US THAT THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE SHOULD GO WELL. I KNOW, TOO, HOW MUCH PERSONAL EFFORT YOU ARE DEVOTING TO THIS END. I RECOGNISE THE DANGER OF ENABLING THE CRITICS OF DEPLOYMENT TO ARGUE THAT BY ALLOWING IT TO GO AHEAD ON THE PRESENT TIMING WE ARE PREJUDICING THE OUTCOME OF THE GENEVA TALKS AND ANTICIPATING THEIR FAILURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, I AM VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE RISKS INHERENT IN MAKING ANY CHANGE TO THE TIMETABLE WHICH, IF IT BECAME KNOWN, COULD CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT OUR COLLECTIVE RESOLUTION WAS BEGINNING TO FALTER. THIS COULD NOT ONLY STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF OUR CRITICS AT HOME: IT COULD ALSO TEMPT THE RUSSIANS TO THINK

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THAT, BY SOME PROPAGANDA MOVE, THEY COULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR BOTH OF US TO ACHIEVE DEPLOYMENT BY THE AGREED DATE OF 31 DECEMBER. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ALL THIS WOULD BE MORE DAMAGING THAN ANY ALLEGATIONS YOU MAY HAVE TO FACE THAT WE ARE FAILING TO TAKE THE GENEVA TALKS SUFFICIENTLY SERIOUSLY.

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT JUDGEMENT TO MAKE: BUT ON BALANCE I BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL OF US, INCLUDING THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, TO STICK TO THE AGREED TIMETABLE WHEREBY DELIVERIES OF THE MAIN EQUIPMENT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM WILL START AT THE BEGINNING OF NOVEMBER.

I AM SURE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT I DO NOT REACH THIS CONCLUSION LIGHTLY: AND THAT IT REFLECTS RONALD REAGAN'S CONCERN AS WELL AS MY OWN. IF YOU STILL FELT THAT THIS COURSE WOULD CREATE INSUPERABLE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES FOR YOU YOU WOULD NO DOUBT WANT TO CONSIDER EXPLAINING THE PROBLEMS TO RONALD REAGAN. WE COULD THEN ALL LOOK AT THE QUESTION AGAIN TOGETHER. BUT IT IS CLEAR TO US THAT THE BULK OF THE EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING THE LAUNCHERS, MUST ARRIVE AT THE BEGINNING OF NOVEMBER. EVEN IF THE DELIVERY OF THE MISSILES AND WARHEADS THEMSELVES DID NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL 22 NOVEMBER (WHICH WOULD BE THE VERY MOST WHICH WE HERE COULD CONSIDER, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF YOUR DEBATE) I UNDERSTAND THAT SUCH AN ADJUSTMENT WOULD BE OPERATIONALLY VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE AMERICANS.

LET ME ASSURE YOU AGAIN HOW AWARE I AM OF THE VERY REAL DIFFICULT YOU FACE BUT FOR ALL THE REASONS I HAVE GIVEN I BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF BOTH OF US - AND OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE - FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM TO STICK TO THE EXISTING TIMETABLE. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT ON REFLECTION YOU WILL AGREE THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY TO PROCEEDS.

WITH BEST WISHES,
YOURS EVER,
MARGARET THATCHER.
ENDS

HOWE
LIMITED
HD / DEFGNCE
PS
PS / MR LUCE
PS / AUS
SIR J BULLARD

MR WRIGHT
MR CARTLEDGE
MR JAMES 2

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 October 1983

TIMETABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT OF INF

Following the meeting held here on 7 October to discuss this subject (a record will reach you separately) the Prime Minister has approved revised draft messages from herself to Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan.

BS

The final texts are enclosed with this letter. I should be grateful if you would arrange for them to be delivered urgently.

I am sending copies of this letter and its enclosures to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

A. L. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO CHANCELLOR KOHL

Dear Herr Chancellor,

I understand from Michael Heseltine that Manfred Woerner and he have been discussing your concern that the delivery of cruise missiles to Britain at the beginning of November is liable to be used by opponents of deployment to embarrass you in the forthcoming Bundestag debate. Michael Heseltine has passed on to me your suggestion that we might be able to delay the arrival of the equipment here until after the Bundestag debate has taken place. Cap Weinberger has also been in touch with him about this.

I have given your suggestion very careful thought, and I have also had a message about it from Ronald Reagan. I fully understand the testing period which your government faces over the next few weeks and I know how important it is for all of us that the Bundestag debate should go well. I know, too, how much personal effort you are devoting to this end. I recognise the danger of enabling the critics of deployment to argue that by allowing it to go ahead on the present timing we are prejudicing the outcome of the Geneva talks and anticipating their failure. On the other hand, I am very worried about the risks inherent in making any change to the timetable which, if it became known, could create the impression that our collective resolution was beginning to falter. This could not only strengthen the hand of our critics at home: it could also tempt the Russians to think that, by some propaganda move, they could make it more difficult for both of us to achieve deployment by the agreed date of 31 December. It seems to me that all this would be more damaging than any allegations you may have to face that we are failing to take the Geneva talks sufficiently seriously.

/ It is a very

It is a very difficult judgement to make; but on balance I believe that it would be in the best interests of all of us, including the Federal Republic, to stick to the agreed timetable whereby deliveries of the main equipment to the United Kingdom will start at the beginning of November.

I am sure you will understand that I do not reach this conclusion lightly; and that it reflects Ronald Reagan's concern as well as my own. If you still felt that this course would create insuperable political difficulties for you you would no doubt want to consider explaining the problems to Ronald Reagan. We could then all look at the question again together. But it is clear to us that the bulk of the equipment, including the launchers, must arrive at the beginning of November. Even if the delivery of the missiles and warheads themselves did not take place until 22 November (which would be the very most which we here could consider, whatever the outcome of your debate) I understand that such an adjustment would be operationally very difficult for the Americans.

Let me assure you again how aware I am of the very real difficulties you face but for all the reasons I have given I believe that it would be in the best interests of both of us - and of the Alliance as a whole - for the United Kingdom to stick to the existing timetable. I very much hope that on reflection you will agree that this is the right way to proceed.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

Margaret Thatcher.

Ref: B06866

*14*
Prime Minister*Agree that these two messages should be sent on*MR COLVES

c Sir Robert Armstrong

*Yes mt Sunday? A.J.C. 7/10.*Timetable for Deployment of INF

Following the Prime Minister's meeting this afternoon with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Defence Secretary, I submit draft messages for the Prime Minister to send to Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Defence Secretary have been consulted and the drafts reflect their views.

*David Goodall*7th October 1983

A D S GOODALL

SUBJECT.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 October 1983

INF

The Prime Minister chaired an ad hoc Ministerial meeting at 4.30 today to consider President Reagan's message of 6 October in which, having referred to the approach from the German Government urging that we delay the arrival of Cruise missiles in the United Kingdom, the President expresses the hope that we will inform the German Government that equipment deliveries to the UK must adhere to the existing schedule, which envisages initial deliveries on 1 November.

The meeting was attended by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Robert Armstrong, Mr. Goodall, Mr. Blelloch and Mr. Wright. In addition to the President's message your letter of 7 October and Roger Bone's letter of the same date were before the meeting.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that in his view any postponement of the deployment programme to meet German wishes would be very damaging in the light of President Reagan's message. It was not clear yet how far German vacillation might be carried. Herr Genscher had rung him today and explained that when he met Mr. Gromyko shortly he would say to the latter that if the Soviet Union intended to make a proposal which might lead to deployment being deferred, that proposal should come forward quickly. Thus there was at least some prospect of further delay on the part of the Germans.

The Defence Secretary said that his aim had always been to arrange that the equipment should arrive in Britain with the minimum of political difficulty. In various conversations with Mr. Weinberger he had taken the line that we should make such adjustments as were necessary to take account of politically sensitive factors. As a consequence the programme had been adjusted several times. The deployment of major equipment had been postponed from last May until November. More recently, it had appeared that the Germans may not have realised the political significance of the deployment of Cruise missiles in Britain for the debate now scheduled in the Bundestag for 21 November. He had discussed this matter with Mr. Weinberger and suggested that he should put the point to the Germans. Mr. Weinberger had raised no objection. He had therefore

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talked to Dr. Woerner who had said that he would consider the point and let us know the German reactions. Subsequently, Dr. Woerner had conveyed a message to the Defence Secretary, apparently endorsed by Chancellor Kohl, asking that our two Governments should work together to minimise German difficulties. It was somewhat awkward that the US Government had now urged that there should be no delay in our deployment schedule.

Equipment had been arriving here over many months. But we were now reaching the most sensitive and most photogenic equipment. He believed that we should stick to the timetable except in respect of missiles and warheads and that these should be brought in on 22 November. Such a delay would not be critical for operational deployment at the end of December. The problem for the Germans was that if missiles and warheads were known to have arrived here before the Bundestag debate opponents of the Federal Government would argue that the debate was not genuine since Germany's allies were proceeding with deployment.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary pointed out that, given the uncertain touch displayed by West German parliamentary managers on this issue, there could be no certainty that the timing of the debate might not slip even further or that the German Socialists might not find some device by which to block final Bundestag approval for the deployment of Pershing II by 31 December. German officials had recently accepted that their problems would be eased if we were to make it clear at a suitable moment in public that although deliveries had begun on a contingency basis, Cruise missiles would not be operational in this country until 31 December and only then if no satisfactory agreement had been reached in Geneva. So, in effect, we could give the Germans what they wanted without damaging the timetable. The Defence Secretary commented that the Germans had seen our timetable and it was precisely that which worried them. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, referring to President Reagan's letter, said that it was clear that the Americans did not wish to see any change in our timetable. If we delayed deliveries, there was a possibility of this leaking and the impression of slippage would not help the German Government.

Summing up the discussion, the Prime Minister said that she thought that our basic message to Chancellor Kohl should be that we were under heavy pressure from President Reagan to stick to the deployment timetable. If this really caused the Germans difficulty, they should approach the US Government. In that event, the maximum delay which we could envisage was until 22 November. We might add the thought that it would be better if we stuck to the existing timetable and thus showed our firmness in carrying out NATO's decision.

There was a danger that the Soviet Union would produce a new proposal shortly before the Bundestag debate. This argued in favour of our sticking to the present timetable.

We should also send a suitable reply to President Reagan, making plain what we had said to Chancellor Kohl.

In view of the different attitudes which appeared to have been adopted by the White House on the one hand and Mr. Weinberger and Mr. Shultz on the other hand, the message to President Reagan

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should make it plain that the Defence Secretary had discussed this question with Mr. Shultz and Mr. Weinberger over a period of some weeks.

It was agreed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Cabinet Office should revise the proposed messages from the Prime Minister to Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan and that these should be submitted to the Prime Minister for her consideration over the weekend.

I am copying this letter to Roger Bone (FCO) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

A. J. COLES

Richard Mottram, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-~~930 7922~~ 218 2111/3

MO 11/9/4

7th October 1983

Dear John,

INF

Roger Bone copied to me his letter of today's date about the response to President Reagan's message. As it has not proved possible to agree on the proposed response, the FCO preferred that I should record separately to you our views.

Mr Heseltine believes that it is important to see the present exchanges with the Americans in context. For the last year or so, we have been at great pains to work closely with the Americans and the Germans in order to ensure that, so far as possible, the timetable for the deliveries of equipment recognises the political problems that the basing countries (and the Germans in particular) undoubtedly face. These discussions have been handled personally by the Defence Secretary (initially Mr Nott but largely Mr Heseltine) with Mr Weinberger and Dr Woerner. The Americans have certainly done a good deal to help and Mr Weinberger has recognised the importance of seeing deployment in its political context.

It was against the background of that cooperation that the Defence Secretary made a point of raising with Mr Weinberger on 13th September that having received the Americans' detailed proposals for the delivery of major items of equipment to the UK, he proposed to let the Germans know what was envisaged so that it could be looked at in terms of the possible impact in Germany prior to the Bundestag debate. The point arose briefly in similar terms in Mr Heseltine's meeting with Mr Shultz the following day. Mr Heseltine emphasised, and the point was well understood, that the timetable was otherwise entirely acceptable to the British Government. Neither at those meetings nor afterwards did the Americans tell us that the timetable was absolutely immutable and it would therefore be pointless to consult the Germans about it.

Having - with American agreement - raised the matter with the Germans, Mr Heseltine considers that we could not refuse to meet German concerns altogether without them legitimately feeling that the consultation had been a charade and that we had let them down because of American pressure. Once the deliveries of all the

A J Coles Esq

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equipment including the missiles are completed, we shall find it very difficult to hold a public line that the system has not effectively been deployed - the general public (and even informed opinion) are likely to be sceptical about the distinction that the system is not "operational". Equally, we must meet American concerns that the deliveries of equipment should begin on 1st November and that we should not give the German Government a handle on deployment here and the opportunity repeatedly to delay.

/ I attach the planned schedule of deliveries to this country. In the light of US concerns, Mr Heseltine proposes that initial deliveries should indeed begin, as the President clearly wishes, on 1st November; that these deliveries should include all of the sensitive items outstanding except for the missiles and the warheads (which are the least of the Americans' logistic problems); and that the Germans should be told that the latter will arrive, come what may in Germany, on 22nd November. The most visible items would thus arrive on schedule and our determination could not be clearer. The Americans' logistic problems would be kept to a minimum, and Mr Heseltine finds it scarcely credible that a delay restricted to the missiles and warheads would in any meaningful way prejudice achievement of the initial operational capability. When Mr Weinberger telephoned him yesterday, Mr Heseltine floated with him without commitment on our part a proposition on these broad lines and Mr Weinberger himself recognised the possibility of one aircraft load of critical items being held back for delivery on 22nd November.

/ I attach an alternative draft message to President Reagan couched in these terms. Ministers may wish to discuss whether a message to Chancellor Kohl should go in parallel or be held back until President Reagan had been given an opportunity to respond to the attachment.

I am copying this letter, and the attachments, to Roger Bone (FCO), David Goodall and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours etc,

Richard Mottram

(R C MOTTRAM)

GLCM EQUIPMENT DELIVERY SCHEDULE

- 1 November: two Launch Control Vehicles (LCCs); two Transporter-Erector - Launchers (TELs); ten missiles; three prime movers. ↖
- 2 November: sixteen warheads; three prime movers.
- 3 November: two TELs; two prime movers; one LCC driver training vehicle.
- 4 November: two TELs; two prime movers; one LCC driver training vehicle.
- 5 November: one prime mover.
- 6 November: no deliveries.
- 7 November: ten missiles, one LCC.
- 8-20 November: four TEL driver training vehicles.

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DRAFT REPLY TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

Thank you for your message. I think it is very unfortunate that the Bundestag debate has slipped. But I do not myself doubt the Federal Chancellor's determination though I am conscious of the scale of the problem he faces. The Germans, as have we, have always seen the need to manage the delivery schedule with an eye to the political realities. They and we have had unstinted help from your people to that end. As things stand now, I agree with you entirely that the best way we can help the Germans is to stick to the existing timetable whereby the first major equipments arrive, as planned, on 1st November. The arrival of these equipments, which it will be impossible altogether to conceal at Greenham Common, will be taken here as ample evidence of our determination to proceed. You need have no doubt of that determination. But I would, for my part, be prepared to see the missiles and warheads arrive last if that would help the Federal Chancellor, provided it was made absolutely plain to him that they would arrive on 22nd November, come what may in Germany. I have no doubt that in this country a delivery schedule completed by the third week in November will be seen to be wholly consistent with the Alliance's decision to deploy and achieve an initial operational capability by the end of December, some five weeks later. My judgement would be that that is how it will be seen in Europe at large.

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DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

PRIME MINISTER

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

CHANCELLOR KOHL

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

I understand that Herr Woerner telephoned Mr Heseltine on 3 October to express your concern that deployment of cruise missiles in Britain at the beginning of November would be used by those opposed to deployment in Germany to embarrass you in the forthcoming Bundestag debate. Michael Heseltine has passed on your request that we consider delaying the arrival of equipment here until after your debate or at the very least making no announcement before then about the arrival of the missiles and other equipment.

I have given your request the most careful consideration and I fully understand the testing period your Government faces over the next few weeks. It is, however, clear to me from a message I received from President Reagan yesterday that any delays to US equipment deliveries to the United Kingdom would be most unwelcome at this late juncture, for both political and technical reasons. I know we both share an over-riding concern that NATO's resolution should not appear to falter at this time. I believe the best contribution that the United Kingdom can make to this

Enclosures—flag(s).....

objective is to proceed with delivery schedules beginning on 1 November as planned. But we shall naturally do our best in public statements here before the Bundestag debate to be as helpful as possible in meeting German concerns. I know our respective officials have already been in touch about this. I look forward to discussing all this further with you in Bonn on 8/9 November.