



Prime Minister

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I hope none of papers 2
will leak.

Ref. A083/3039

PRIME MINISTER

A.J.C. $\frac{26}{10}$

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Cabinet: Parliamentary Affairs: INF Deployment

Flag A

Mention will be made under Parliamentary Affairs of the Government's decision to offer the Opposition a debate on INF deployment on Monday 31 October. You may wish to explain that this decision was taken in the light of the disclosure in the Guardian of 22 October that the first American cruise missiles were scheduled to arrive in this country on 1 November. It was thought that this disclosure, combined with the criticism of the United States generated by American military intervention in Grenada, might well prompt a demand for a debate on the cruise missile issue under Standing Order no. 10. Since the Government had indicated in the summer that there would in any case be a further opportunity for the House to debate the INF issue, it was decided that it would be sensible to offer the debate now. In view of the Secretary of State for Defence's absence in Canada (to attend an important meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG)) 31 October was the earliest date available.

2. As a consequence of the Guardian's disclosure it has also been decided to negotiate a new date with the Americans for the delivery of the missiles. This will not involve any change in the deployment timetable: we remain firmly committed to the agreed programme whereby the missiles will be installed and operational in the United Kingdom by 31 December. The intention is that delivery of major items of missile-related equipment should start on 1 November as planned, but that the missiles themselves should now arrive towards the end of the delivery programme rather than at the beginning. This will have the advantage of separating their arrival from the Parliamentary debate. It may also make it possible to take account of the German reluctance to have any missiles delivered to Europe until after their Bundestag debate on 21 November. The Secretary of



State for Defence will be negotiating a new date with Mr Weinberger in the margins of the NPG meeting. The new date will not be announced in advance; but the Secretary of State for Defence will tell the House that Parliament will be informed when the missiles have been delivered.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

*approved by Sir Robert Armstrong
and signed in his absence.*

26 October 1983

Lindsay Wilkinson

A

Guardian 22.10.83

Troops stand by for the Greenham missile date

Whitehall sets November 1 cruise arrival

By David Fairhall,
Defence Correspondent

EXCLUSIVE

The first American nuclear cruise missiles are scheduled to arrive at Greenham Common in Berkshire on November 1 with their atomic warheads.

They will arrive by air, to be followed on present secret plans over the next seven days by further deliveries of launch vehicles and other operational equipment. The British and US governments are evidently prepared to go ahead with the deliveries in spite of the possibility that Soviet negotiators at the Geneva arms control talks may use the missiles' arrival as a public excuse to walk out.

But a three-week postponement is still being considered in Whitehall, presumably to give the German Bundestag time to debate the controversial Nato nuclear modernisation programme of which the ground-launched cruise missiles at Greenham Common form part, along with Pershing II ballistic missiles in West Germany.

If the missiles are coming on November 1 — and in the light of this report the timetable is almost certain to be called into question again in Whitehall — security at the Berkshire base will be massively strengthened, initially by Ministry of Defence police and members of the RAF Regiment, but if necessary also

by several battalions of British soldiers.

This is not only to prevent members of the women's peace camp cutting through the perimeter wire to demonstrate against the American weapons' arrival but also to ensure that armed US Air Force troops guarding the missiles are not provoked into opening fire under the strict rules of engagement which the American military authorities apply to the protection of their nuclear equipment.

If the anti-nuclear demonstrations do lead to violence it is considered politically vital to keep the Americans as far away from it as possible.

The Defence Minister, Mr Michael Heseltine, is believed to have advised the Prime Minister that, since the missiles arrival, accompanied by 50ft-long articulated launch vehicles, can hardly be disguised from the women camped outside the airbase gates the Government's best course is to make an immediate public announcement on the same day in the House of Commons.

This can then be followed by a Ministry of Defence press conference to explain and justify the Government's support for Nato's nuclear programme before the parliamen-

tary opposition or the campaign for nuclear disarmament can get their word in.

Mr Heseltine is bound also to emphasise that the cruise missiles arrival in this country does not mean that they are operational. The first flight of 16 missiles forming part of the USAF's 501st Tactical Missile Wing is not scheduled to declare its "initial operating capability" until the end of December, so there is still time for the operational deployment to be cancelled if there is a last-minute breakthrough in the Geneva talks.

Even beyond that, the deployment could be limited to fewer than 96 missiles allocated to Greenham Common if an agreement to this effect were reached with the Soviet Union. The complete US force planned for the UK consists of 160 missiles, but some of these will be based at Molesworth, near Huntingdon, where the base will not be ready to accept them until the late 1980s.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said last night: "We have nothing to add to what we have previously announced about the planned deployment by the end of the year."

However, the fact that the plan has now leaked out must force the Government security services to a hasty review of their delivery timetable in consultation with the US Air Force, particularly since atomic warheads are involved.

Extract from The Guardian 22/10/83

CCTF



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MO 11/9/4

27th October 1983

Dear Roger,

INF DEBATE - MONDAY 31ST OCTOBER 1983

/ I attach the terms of the motion for this debate, which has been cleared by Mr Heseltine. I should be grateful to know that you are content with this formulation by close of play today.

I am copying this letter to John Coles (No 10 Downing Street), David Heyhoe (Lord Privy Seal), Murdo MacLean (Chief Whip) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever
Nick Evans

(H N R EVANS)

R Bone Esq

INF DEBATE - 31ST OCTOBER 1983

This House reaffirms its support for the NATO 1979 twin track decision on intermediate range nuclear forces: it strongly backs the West's efforts to achieve a mutual, balanced and verifiable agreement at the Geneva negotiations which could make unnecessary the deployment of cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe; but confirms that, in the absence of such an agreement, cruise missiles must be operationally deployed in the UK by the end of 1983.

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and ~~support~~ in the lack of such agreement supports efforts to achieve a mutual balanced agreement at the Geneva negotiations.

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