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cc MASTER SET

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

MR. HATFIELD  
Cabinet Office

Cruise Missile Deployment in the United Kingdom

The Prime Minister held a meeting here at 0930 on Wednesday, 26 October to discuss the above subject. The meeting was attended by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Lord President of the Council, the Chief Whip and officials.

The Defence Secretary said that the delivery date of 1 November for the first batch of Cruise missiles arriving in this country had been prejudiced by its disclosure in The Guardian of 22 October and by the parliamentary reaction to the American military intervention in Grenada. It was essential for the United Kingdom to adhere to the agreed timetable for deployment, which meant that the missile system must be installed and operational by the end of the year. But there was no reason why adjustments should not be made to the delivery schedule. The Germans had already made it clear that it would be helpful to them if the missiles themselves (as distinct from related items of equipment) were not delivered until after the Bundestag debate on 21 November; and Mr. Shultz and Mr. Weinberger had both been relaxed about this possibility when he had raised it with them in Washington in September. The aim should be to dissociate the delivery of the missiles from the parliamentary debate on deployment which was to take place on 31 October, and also to avoid prejudicing the outcome of the debate in the German Bundestag.

There was general agreement that it was now important in parliamentary terms that the missiles should not arrive here immediately after the parliamentary debate. But the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary pointed out that any adjustment of the delivery schedule was likely to become known and would inevitably be linked with our disagreement with the United States over Grenada. It would be seen by the Americans as a form of retaliation; and it would pinpoint the issue of mutual confidence between the United States and her European allies in a way which could have damaging consequences for the Alliance.

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The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that the disagreement over Grenada must not be allowed to affect or be thought to affect Britain's policies towards the Alliance. There was nothing unusual in disagreements between allies on issues where interests and perspectives differed. Nothing should be done which might encourage isolationist or anti-European tendencies in the United States. It must therefore be made clear to the Americans that it remained our common objective to ensure that Cruise missile deployment was implemented by the agreed date, and that the British Government was determined to stick to the timetable. Within that timetable, however, a new date should be found for the delivery of the missiles consistent with keeping their arrival well clear of the parliamentary debate on 1 November and with the need to have the missiles operational by the end of the year. The Parliamentary difficulties facing the West German Government were also relevant. The Defence Secretary should explore the matter personally with Mr. Weinberger in the margins of the Nuclear Planning Group meeting with a view to reaching agreement with him on a new delivery date which would meet the conditions she had described.

In view of the sensitivity of this document, I am not copying it to other recipients. I am, however, writing to the Private Secretaries of the Ministers who attended the meeting to say that the record is available in the Cabinet Office for consultation if necessary.

A. J. COLES

27 October, 1983

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Fall

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

27 October, 1983

Cruise Missile Deployment in the  
United Kingdom

The Prime Minister held a meeting at 0930 on Wednesday, 26 October to discuss the above subject. In view of the sensitivity of the discussion, I am not circulating a record. But a record is available in the Cabinet Office and may be consulted on application to the Cabinet Secretary.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence), Colin Walters (Lord President's Office) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

B. Fall, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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The Defence Secretary said that the delivery date of 1 November for the first batch of cruise missiles arriving in this country had been prejudiced by its disclosure in The Guardian of 22 October and by the parliamentary reaction to the American military intervention in Grenada. It was essential for the United Kingdom to adhere to the agreed timetable for deployment, which meant that the missile system must be installed and operational by the end of the year. But there was no reason why adjustments should not be made to the delivery schedule. The Germans had already made it clear that it would be helpful to them if the missiles themselves (as distinct from related items of equipment) were not delivered until after the Bundestag debate on 21 November; and Mr Shultz and Mr Weinberger had both been relaxed about this possibility when he had raised it with them in Washington in September. The aim should be to dissociate the delivery of the missiles from the parliamentary debate on deployment which was to take place on ~~1 November~~<sup>31 October</sup>, and <sup>also</sup> to ~~time it so as to cause least embarrassment to our German allies~~ <sup>avoid prejudicing the outcome of the debate in the German Bundestag.</sup>

There was general agreement that it was now important in parliamentary terms that the missiles should not arrive <sup>here</sup> immediately after the parliamentary debate. But the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary pointed out that any adjustment of the delivery schedule was likely to become known and would inevitably be linked with our disagreement with the United States over Grenada. It would be seen by the Americans as a form of retaliation; and it would pinpoint the issue of mutual confidence between the United States and her European allies in a way which could have damaging consequences for the Alliance.

Mr Cles  
A note of this  
morning's Ministerial  
discussion of  
cruise missile  
deployment.

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and with the need to ~~meet the need~~ have the missiles operational by the end of the year ~~and with the desirability of taking~~

Parliamentary

~~should also be taken~~  
~~were also relevant~~

Please will you <sup>and other recipients ensure</sup> ensure that this letter is only seen by those with an operational need to do so and that no further copies are made.

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