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10 DOWNING STREET

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*with ABC*

From the Private Secretary

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4 October 1983

GLCM DEPLOYMENT TIMETABLE

Your Secretary of State called on the Prime Minister this afternoon to discuss the above subject.

He explained that the deployment of cruise missiles in this country had originally been scheduled for the first week of November. When it became apparent that there would be a crucial debate in the German Bundestag on 15 November, he had told Mr. Weinberger that it would be necessary to postpone deployment in order to avoid handing an argument to the opponents of the German Government in the Bundestag debate. Weinberger had not demurred.

On 3 October, Weinberger had rung your Secretary of State to say that he had spoken to Chancellor Kohl and that the latter had confirmed that it would be embarrassing for him if the missiles arrived before the Bundestag debate which had now been postponed until 21 November.

From our point of view, delay did not matter provided that the missiles were in this country in December. He therefore believed that he should now tell the United States that no actual weapons should be deployed here before 21 November, though other items of equipment could be. He would similarly say to the German Defence Minister that we would wait until 21 November before any missiles were imported.

The Prime Minister agreed with this approach but expressed the hope that no further delays would occur.

As regards publicity, Mr. Heseltine explained that we had never stated publicly when the missiles would arrive. He believed that we should not make an announcement in advance of their arrival but once they were here we should have to confirm that they had arrived.

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Richard Mottram, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

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