

Prime Minister

9



FCS/83/193

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

There are a lot of considerations
 here which did not come out
 in Dr. Hecht's presentation to
 you yesterday. It looks as though
 further discussion will be needed.

INF

A.S.C. 5/10

will request
 if required

1. I understand (your Private Secretary's letter of 4 October to mine), that in response to representations by your West German colleague, Dr Woerner, you have decided to ask the Americans to postpone the delivery of Cruise missiles to Greenham Common until after the Bundestag's debate on INF, and that the Prime Minister has concurred in this decision.
2. This is a matter which concerns the political as well as the military security of the Alliance. In the light of the considerations which follow, I hope that you will agree to postpone action until we have had time to reflect. It might also be useful to have further discussion with the US military on the logistics of deployment.
3. My present understanding, based on information arising most recently from the meeting of the UK/US London Working Group on 30 September, is that delivery to Greenham Common of the first flight of Cruise missiles would have to take place during the first week of November if the undertaking to which we subscribed in 1979, that the missiles would be deployed by the end of 1983 in the absence of a satisfactory agreement at Geneva, is to be fulfilled. I gather that this longer lead-time for our deployment is due at least in part to the compression of the time-scale for the deployment of Pershing IIs in the FRG necessitated by the postponement of the Bundestag's INF debate.

/4.

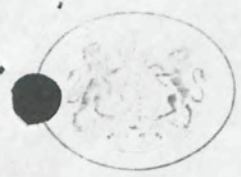


4. If the American logistical assessment is correct, any delay in deliveries to Greenham Common beyond the first week of November will mean that UK deployment cannot be effective by 31 December. The Bundestag debate is not now due to take place until 21 November. I would be very reluctant to make UK deployment hostage to the Federal German political process. Recent weeks have shown that this process can be fickle and uncertain.

5. Since the Federal Government first agreed in June, in response to SPD pressure, to allow the Bundestag to debate INF stationing on or after 15 November before Pershing deliveries began, the debate has been rescheduled twice. Chancellor Kohl nevertheless assured the Americans (as State Secretary Mertes informed us in London on 13 September) that in no circumstances would deployment be delayed beyond 15 November. Not only has this assurance evidently now fallen by the wayside, but the Bundestag debate itself has been postponed until 21 November. Given the uncertain touch which the West German parliamentary managers have displayed on this issue, there can be no certainty that the timing of the debate may not slip even further or that the German Socialists may not find some procedural device by which to block final Bundestag approval for the deployment of Pershing IIs by 31 December.

6. This is an issue on which the Americans will no doubt be looking to us to set an example of firm resolve to the rest of the Alliance. As the Prime Minister said in Ottawa and in Washington, our nerve is being tested. West German anxieties could all too easily become contagious. We should not risk allowing the West German

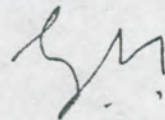
/Government



Government or opposition parties to exercise, in effect, a veto over the timing of our own deployments: to do so would vindicate the Soviet strategy of working on West German nerves.

7. I am of course very well aware of, and sympathetic to, the domestic political problems which Chancellor Kohl and his colleagues face. In the annual Political/Military Talks between UK and German officials which took place in Bonn yesterday, the Germans reflected Dr Woerner's concern about the impact in the FRG of an announcement in London in early November that missile deliveries had begun. In discussion, they accepted that their problems would be eased if we were to make it clear, on 1 November or whichever date you choose for your statement in the House of Commons, that although deliveries have begun on a contingency basis, Cruise missiles will not be operational in this country until 31 December and only then if no satisfactory agreement has been reached in Geneva. I think this would go as far as we should towards meeting German domestic political concerns, which must not be allowed to take priority over the implementation, at least as far as the UK is concerned, of NATO's 1979 decision.

8. I am sending copies of this minute to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary to the Cabinet.



(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

5 October 1983

SECRET

file with HJC 6



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 01-~~XXXXX~~ 218 2111/3

MO 18/1/1

4th October 1983

M 5/10
P.C.

New Binn.

TIMETABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT OF INF

During his visit to the United States, Mr Heseltine raised with Mr Weinberger the deployment timetable for major items of cruise missile equipment at Greenham Common and it was agreed that we should consult the Germans about whether the proposed deliveries at the beginning of November were difficult for them. We have now heard from Dr Woerner that they do indeed find the timetable difficult. The Defence Secretary has decided that, in the light of the German objections, we should tell the American Government that the timetable for delivery should be put back until after the Bundestag debate. He spoke to the Prime Minister about this briefly this afternoon who agreed with this decision.

I attach a draft telegram to Washington which Mr Heseltine has approved. I should be grateful if this could be despatched quickly: we would then propose to tell Brelloch to get together with his German and American colleagues in the margins of tomorrow's HLG meeting to fill out the details.

I am copying this letter to John Coles (No 10) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

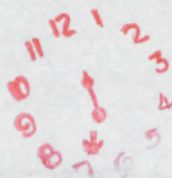
Richard Mottram

(R C MOTTRAM)

B J P Fall Esq

SECRET

5 OCT 1983



DRAFT TELEGRAM TO WASHINGTON

COPY TO: BONN
 UKDEL NATO
 MODUK (for Ps/sups)

TIMETABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT OF INF

When the Defence Secretary, accompanied by you, met Mr Weinberger on 13th September you will recall that he raised the timetable for the delivery of the major items of equipment at Greenham Common at the beginning of November. He said that this was acceptable to the British Government but needed also to be looked at from the point of view of the possible impact in Germany prior to the Bundestag debate. He said that he would be raising the point with Dr Woerner in the margins of the trilateral Ministerial meeting on 21st September.

2. When Mr Heseltine raised this with Woerner he agreed to consult his colleagues and informers^{US} of their views in due course. Woerner telephoned^{Mr Heseltine} yesterday to say that Chancellor Kohl had now been consulted. The Chancellor was most concerned that the deployment of missiles in Britain at the beginning of November would be used by those opposed to deployment in Germany to embarrass him in the forthcoming Bundestag debate. It would be argued that this deployment proved that NATO countries were not serious in seeking a solution by negotiation at Geneva and had already anticipated failure of the talks. His Government hoped that the arrival of the equipment might be delayed until after the debate or at the very least that no announcement should be made about the arrival of the missiles^{and other equipment}. Mr Heseltine explained that the latter alternative was not feasible since the arrival could not be concealed, Parliament would be sitting, and questions would have to be answered.

3. In the light of Chancellor Kohl's strongly-held views we now wish the deployment of the major items of equipment to be deferred until after the Bundestag debate. We appreciate that this deferment may delay the initial operating capability of the system but consider that this is less important than the potential political difficulties for the German Government.

4. Mr Heseltine would have preferred to explain this decision personally to Mr Weinberger but feels it should not be done over an insecure telephone. Would you therefore please arrange at the earliest opportunity to explain to Mr Weinberger the ^{need to change the} ~~nature of our~~ ^{request}, referring back to his earlier conversation ^{with} ~~with you and~~ ^{and with you} Mr Heseltine. You should suggest that the detailed background to the German concern and the implications for the timetable for deliveries to the UK might be discussed privately by Perle, Brelloch and Tandecki in the margins of the meeting of the High Level Group which is about to take place in Brussels. We shall be instructing Brelloch accordingly. *Please inform us of US reaction.*

5. Could Bonn please explain to Dr Woerner the action we are now taking to follow up his conversation with Mr Heseltine.

Reference : INF
R 4