



MO 11/2/2

*mf*PRIME MINISTERBASING OF CRUISE MISSILES

Prior to our meeting on Thursday, you will wish to know where matters stand on the timing of the deployment of GLCMs at Greenham Common.

2. You will recall that, in his minute of 15th December, my predecessor said that we expected to hear from the Americans in January to follow up his own discussion with Mr Weinberger. Richard Perle of the Pentagon explained the present position when he met his opposite number here, John Blesloch, on Friday. He revealed that both the US Air Force (USAF) and the US Department of Energy (who are responsible for nuclear safety) are finding some difficulty with the new proposed timetable. This is because there is a problem for both of them in trying to reconcile different deployment dates with the various tests and standards associated with declaring, formally, an "initial operational capability". It has, accordingly, been registered with the Americans that this is, in UK and for that matter Alliance terms, really a secondary issue: what matters is that unless the INF talks produce an acceptable arms control solution, the first missiles should have arrived in the basing countries by the end of 1983.

3. I have asked whether the Americans, for some reason, might be stalling. Officials' judgement is that they are not: that they understand the importance of the November date: and will find our attitude on the secondary importance of achieving initial operating





capability helpful. They are also clear that the sooner the final timetable is settled, the better.

4. There is to be a further meeting in Washington on 25th January of which I hope to hear the outcome before our own meeting. If so, I will report the latest position then.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to our MISC 7 colleagues, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "H. G. P." or similar, written in a cursive style.

Ministry of Defence  
25th January 1983