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PRIME MINISTERCHEVALINE

You will recall that when I reported to you on the Chevaline (A3TK) missile firings on 2 March this year, I said that it was hoped that the first operational deployment of Chevaline would take place this summer. I am writing now to let you know the present position.

2. Six Chevaline missiles have been loaded into HMS Renown which is now conducting a training patrol. This will be followed by full operational deployment of the system in August 1982. The missile processing programme is tight, however, and delay, such as might be caused by an industrial dispute, could lead to some shortfall of missiles against the full operational outload of 16. Nevertheless, provided there is no significant trouble of this nature, a full outload should be available. If there should be a shortfall, I have decided that HMS Renown should conduct her planned deterrent patrol with less than a full outload of Chevaline missiles. Even with the six A3TK missiles which are already embarked, we will have a more effective capability against the current Moscow ABM defences than with a full outload of 16 Polaris (A3T) missiles.

3. I am sending copies of this minute to members of MISC 7 and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Ministry of Defence

17th June 1982

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