



LE PREMIER MINISTRE

subject copy filed on:-

Defence: TNF: Pt 2.

Brussels, June 12th 1980

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**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 125 A/80**

Prime Minister

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Dear Prime Minister,

I read with much appreciation the considerate views expressed in your letter of May 6, in the TNF deployment problem and I want to thank you for your offer of support.

I am fully aware, as are my Colleagues the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Defence, of the crucial importance of a prompt decision in this matter. Belgium's - and more or less the Alliance's - credibility is indeed at stake; and we recognize that substantial negotiations will only be possible as soon as our firmness and determination to preserve the military balance will appear devoid of any doubt.

Belgium is, however, presently undergoing a period of basic readjustment and constitutional change. The debate on devolution matters, which has given way to a government crisis, is still in progress. In these circumstances, it is of paramount importance to preserve the broadest possible consensus on matters of national security and on our contribution to the Alliance solidarity. Nothing could be gained by a

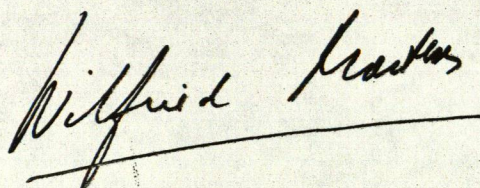
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The Right Hon. Margaret THATCHER, M.P.
Prime Minister
10, Downing Street
LONDON

political course resulting in the collapse of that consensus, which prevailed for more than thirty years.

I intend, with my Colleagues the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence, to work on the TNF deployment matter in the coming weeks with the objective of reaching the necessary decision.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wilfried Martens". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

W. MARTENS