

Netherlands

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH



233-4231

7 December 1979

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Pms

M O'D Alexander Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

Dear Michael,

VISIT OF MR VAN AGT

I attach a draft telegram which I should like to get off to Washington so that the Embassy can pass on the gist of last night's discussion to the State Department before Mr van Agt arrives by Concorde this morning. To serve this purpose, the telegram will need to issue not later than noon. Could you please let me know by telephone if you are content?

Yours ever,  
Patrick.

P H Moberly

Encl

File No. ....  
Department DEFENCE  
Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) P. H. MOBERLY  
Tel. Extn 233-4231

OUTWARD  
TELEGRAM

Security Classification CONFIDENTIAL
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Distribution:-

(TEXT)

Your tel No 4065: TNF Modernisation.

1. In advance of his meeting with President Carter please give State Department the following account of Netherland's Prime Minister's visit to London yesterday evening.

2. British Ministers stressed the importance of an Alliance programme of the size proposed. This was essential to match growing Soviet advantage in this area. Only the Russians would gain if the necessary decisions were not taken by NATO next week.

3. After explaining the very delicate political situation he faced in The Hague, Mr van Agt suggested that he might be able to carry his Cabinet and then

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Parliament if he put forward what he described as a commitment to commit the Netherlands.

His Government would go along with the Alliance's production and deployment programme on condition that the Dutch allocation of ~~48 GLCMs~~ <sup>Decision to Deploy would be deferred</sup> would be subject <sup>to review before the end of 1981.</sup> ~~to review before the end of 1981.~~ <sup>It would then be considered</sup> in the light of progress in arms control negotiations. He made clear that this suggestion (which corresponds to that in paragraph 5 of TUR) was <sup>a</sup> his personal idea <sup>Suggested only with van der Kraak & Scholten.</sup> which he asked should be <sup>that it</sup> treated with great discretion.

4. In our view any second decision point of this kind carries considerable risks. It may prove infectious to the Belgians <sup>about whom the Dutch continue to be worried in contrast to the robust Italian attitude.</sup> In any case, there must be doubts whether van Agt's idea would satisfy the domestic opposition which he faces. Nevertheless, if it would keep the Netherlands within a NATO consensus we believe it could be worth accepting an arrangement of this sort. Mr van Agt confirmed ~~two points to which we attach importance~~ <sup>First, he would expect only the Dutch themselves to review the Netherlands' contribution in two years' time, without the issue necessarily having to be reopened for the Alliance as a whole at that stage.</sup> ~~Secondly, he envisaged that, in return for the understanding of their partners/this review proposal, the Netherlands would endorse the full production and deployment programme of 572 warheads at~~

/next

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

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next week's Ministerial meeting.

5. The talks here ended before the news of last night's vote by the Dutch Parliament was received.