



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Better not to send this.

26 April 1984

It would be regarded as interference.  
 Mr. Lubbers will do everything he can to  
 get the right decision  
 without any prompting.  
 Jan. Lubbers

Netherlands/INF

The Prime Minister will be aware from recent telegrams that the Netherlands Cabinet is due to take a decision on 27 April on the proposals which it should put to Parliament on the implementation of the Netherlands' share of NATO's dual-track decision of 1979. The requirement for a Parliamentary decision stems from the then Government's undertaking in 1979 that Parliament would be given an opportunity to consider the Netherlands' commitment to deploy in the light of progress in arms control meanwhile. The timing of this climax of a long-simmering political crisis over INF deployment is dictated by the need to let contracts for the preparation of the designated Cruise Missile site at Woensdrecht in June if the target date for operational deployment, late 1986, is to be met. I enclose a copy of FCO telno 52 to The Hague, which summarises a meeting held in Brussels on 25 April (without a Netherlands presence) to discuss what other basing Allies might do in this situation by way of damage limitation.

A further development has been the arrival in London yesterday, for talks with FCO officials, of emissaries from The Hague charged with explaining the proposal which Mr Lubbers currently intends to put to his Cabinet on 27 April. This, the so-called "crisis deployment option", would involve a Netherlands decision not to deploy Cruise Missiles on Dutch territory in peace time but to fly them in from elsewhere in time of crisis. This proposal is open to a number of serious objections, both practical and political, and it is desirable that the UK, along with other Allies, should make it clear to Mr Lubbers that we have no enthusiasm for it.

Our present information is that President Reagan intends to send a message to Mr Lubbers next week, rather than this week as originally envisaged. Sir Geoffrey Howe has been keeping closely in touch with the issue. His initial reaction had been to incline against intervention by the Prime Minister, not least because such interventions

/should not



should not be devalued by too frequent use. He has now concluded however that the wrong decision from the Dutch on this issue would be so damaging that an intervention by the Prime Minister would be justified. One factor that inclined in favour of this decision was an impression of concern by the Japanese Foreign Minister yesterday on this very subject. Abe raised the point in the course of a more wide-ranging enquiry into the strength of NATO commitments. His reaction is likely to be typical of that of other countries.

If the Prime Minister were to agree to send a message - which could be delivered personally by HM Ambassador in The Hague - there would be advantage in conveying it early on the morning of 27 April, before the Netherlands Cabinet meets. This would both maximise its impact and separate it from the message which President Reagan will be sending later on.

/ I enclose a draft text, which Sir Geoffrey Howe has approved.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R B Bone', written in a cursive style.

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: ~~XXXXXX~~ letter/~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr Lubbers

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

It was good of you to arrange to keep us in London informed of the progress of your deliberations in The Hague about your Government's approach to INF deployment in the Netherlands. I am very well aware of the scale and difficulty of the political problems which you face on this issue. I and my colleagues have been following developments with sympathy and concern.

The British Government attaches overriding importance to preserving the integrity of the dual-track decision which was adopted by the Alliance as a whole in December 1979. I am of course mindful of the qualification which the Netherlands Government attached at the time to its own share of the implementation of that decision; but I do believe that we must keep equally in view the effect which a retrospective derogation from the joint decision could have on other basing countries, on the credibility of the Alliance resolve and, not least, on the incentive for the Russians eventually to resume nuclear arms control negotiations.

/For these

Enclosures—flag(s).....

For these reasons, I see major difficulties in the proposal, which your emissaries came to London to explain, for an agreement under which Cruise Missiles would not be stationed in the Netherlands in time of peace but would be flown in only in time of crisis. Even if its obvious practical difficulties could be resolved, a plan on these lines could, as it seems to me, have an escalatory effect during the period of tension which would bring it into operation; and it could open the way to requests from other basing countries for changes in the 1979 decision.

I do not for a moment underestimate the problems which you face during the next few days and weeks. But I do wish to express the strong hope that if your Government is not able at this time to go ahead with the physical preparations for INF deployment in your country, any unavoidable delay in doing so will be balanced by a strong reaffirmation of Netherlands support in principle for the integrated decision of 1979.

SECRET

bc. PC

DSG



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

27 April 1984

*Dear Roger,*

NETHERLANDS/INF

Thank you for your letter of 26 April to John Coles.

As I told you on the telephone last night, the Prime Minister decided not to send any message to Mr. Lubbers. She feels that it could be regarded as interference in his affairs, and that he will do everything he can to get the right decision without any prompting from us.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

*Yours ever,*

*David*

David Barclay

Roger Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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