

**April 22, 1979**

**Speaking notes for the talks with Vice President  
Mondale on TNF and NPG membership**

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**Summary:**

Speaking notes for the Dutch position on the modernization of Theater Nuclear Forces (TNF) and also on NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) membership. Notes stress that the Dutch position on TNF is to find an approach that maximizes alliance solidarity. The Dutch are also seeking to become full members of the NPG at the ministerial level.

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**Contents:**

Original Scan

Speaking notes for the talks with Vice President Mondale  
on TNF (Grey Area)

1. We do appreciate the seriousness of the Grey Area issue.  
It is up to the Alliance to come up with the right response.
2. As it concerns a threat to the Alliance as a whole, it is imperative that a solution be found which implies a maximum of solidarity of the allies.
3. Therefore the importance of participation is underlined and we understand that in this connection the allies are looking also at the Netherlands.
4. It is too early to take any decisions. In order to enable us to do so we need to have at our disposal an overall view of on the one hand the possibilities for the TNF modernization (weaponsystems) and on the other hand those for arms control.  
It is satisfactory indeed that now for this second aspect a special working group has been formed too.
5. In the context of the special Netherlands considerations it should be pointed out that it is my government's policy to reduce the role of nuclear weapons. This means that modernization of TNF shall not even give the impression of extending that overall role but it can mean that a certain shift in accentuation takes place within the field of the TNF. If that happens it is important that the number of nuclear warheads is not increased
6. and finally it would like to point out that any further step regarding the ERFB weapon would have a disastrous influence on the decision making on TNF modernization.
7. Summarizing I would like to state that decisions concerning this very complicated issue can at the very earliest only be taken at the end of this year. These decisions should be based on both recommendations concerning TNF one on modernization one on arms control, which will then be submitted to the Minister of the NATO countries.

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Speaking notes for the talks with Vice President Mondale on the NPG membership

The Netherlands Minister of Defence will at the following ministerial meeting at the Nuclear Planning Group, a formal proposal to modify the existing membership arrangements in order to make it possible for any NPG member to be represented at ministerial level on a permanent basis.

At the time of the creation of the NPG, the Netherlands already pointed out clearly the inconveniences of a restricted participation, which in itself is at variance with the principle of the equality of the allies. The U.S. argument that, in the light of the special and restrictive character of NPG matters, discussion in a more reduced composition was to be preferred, induced at that stage the Netherlands Government to accept the arrangements for a ~~rotating~~ <sup>continuing</sup> membership of some of the NPG nations.

The nature of the subjects treated in those years helped to overcome our objections.

But since 1966 great changes have taken place. The whole question of nuclear defence has acquired enormous political importance. I mention SALT, and the growth of Soviet nuclear strength. We have now all kinds of questions in NATO dealing with the possible modernization of theater nuclear forces in particular, but not only those concerned with the so-called grey area. It is also clear that parliament and public opinion are acutely aware of the problem of nuclear weaponry and governments are required all the time to give the most specific explanations on the matters of nuclear policy to parliament.

As it is the responsibility of the Nuclear Planning Group to deal with these crucial issues which are so much in the forefront of our attention, it is really no longer acceptable that we are not full members at the ministerial level.