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Auth: NWS 949508  
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SUBJECT: Amsterdam Premier of "On the Beach"

Nearly three months later than originally scheduled, Stanley Kramer's film version of Nevil Shute's book "On the Beach" was finally premiered in Amsterdam on March 4, 1960. Although an Amsterdam premier had been planned for mid-December to coincide with premiers in fourteen other foreign countries, the Netherlands showing was delayed, reportedly under pressure by various local groups (see ConGen telegram under reference).

The Amsterdam premier of the film was a relatively quiet and unspectacular affair held at the Alhambra, a "neighborhood" theatre. Presence at this affair was by invitation only, with religious and business leaders, students and local military personnel in attendance. There was no ranking official from the municipal government or the consular corps present. Few significant comments were reported from the opening night crowd, except that certain Dutch military persons reportedly took the occasion to point out to friends that the story was exaggerated beyond the point of scientific probability.

With but one exception, "On the Beach" received favorable review by the Dutch press after its Netherlands premier on March 4. The Catholic paper De Volkskrant noted that much mis-information could be avoided if it had been expressly stated that "On the Beach" was not an informational film but rather science fiction. The same newspaper carried a special block article by the BBB (Bevordering Bescherming Bevolking-Dutch Home Guard) which emphasized that the film is only science fiction and that the information concerning fall-out and radio activity is inaccurate. A representative press clipping from De Volkskrant of March 5, 1960 is enclosed as Enclosure No. 1 (5 copies).

As stated above, the film had earlier been the center of some local attention inasmuch as the premier date in the Netherlands was delayed by the Salvation Army, Civil Defense officials and others since they reportedly did not feel it would be appropriate to permit a film of this nature to be shown during the Christmas Season and that it was defeatist in nature. The Communist newspapers De Waarheid alleges that this explanation is false and the true reason for the delayed presentation of the film was to allow Dutch authorities first to complete their NATO commitments. A clipping from De Waarheid of March 5, 1960 is enclosed as Enclosure No. 2 (5 copies).

Normal showings of "On the Beach", it is understood, have been fairly well

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attended. Its routine exhibition has been marked by no special attention, except in the case of a local branch of the World Federalists which has distributed leaflets at the exit of the theatre in Amsterdam (and reportedly in The Hague) urging people to subscribe to a fund which would be used to advocate the raising of a World police force whose mission would involve the prevention of a nuclear war. Five copies of this leaflet are enclosed as Enclosure No. 3.

*G. Edward Clark*

G. Edward Clark  
American Consul General

Enclosures: *AK*

1. Newspaper clipping from De Volkskrant dated March 5, 1960, 5 copies.
2. Newspaper clipping from De Waarheid dated March 5, 1960, 5 copies.
3. Leaflet distributed by local branch of the World Federalists, 5 copies.

cc: Amembassy, THE HAGUE  
Amcongen, ROTTERDAM

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*AK*