

PREM 19/2075

'SECRET'

MT.

4722

Confidential Filing.

The sinking of the Townsend Thoresen
Ferry "Herald of Free Enterprise"
at Zeebrugge.

DISASTERS

March 1987.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
6-3-87		9-2-88					
7-3-87							
8-3-87							
9-3-87							
10-3-87							
10-3-87							
12-3-87							
13-3-87							
14-3-87							
16-3-87							
17-3-87							
19-3-87							
20-3-87							
8-4-87							
23-4-87							
24-4-87							
27-4-87							
1-5-87							
13-5-87							
14-5-87							
18-6-87							
20-7-87							
23-7-87							
24-7-87							
5-8-87							
25-8-87							

PREM 19/2075

NOTE FOR TOP OF FILE

NB

Papers on the welfare
of Martin Hartley are
held by Garden Rooms.

Julie

10.4.87



DJO

Ndr Q

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref:

Your ref:

A Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

- 9 FEB 1988

Dear Andy

ZEEBRUGGE DISASTER FUND - TAX

We spoke this morning.

As I mentioned, the Daily Mirror ran a story this morning (copy attached) about £½m tax on the Zeebrugge disaster fund.

Mr Moir, Chief Executive of Dover Council and Trustee of the Fund, telephoned our Permanent Secretary to explain the position. As the article admits towards the end, the tax is not on the donations, but on income from investing the balance of the fund - and the trustees were aware that there would be this liability when they set the fund up as a discretionary trust. They are arranging to minimise the tax liability by making donations to victims under 18 from this investment income, so that they can reclaim the tax paid on these. The trustees are not themselves in any way critical of these arrangements, and it seems that the Fund Manager did not use any of the words attributed to him in the article.

Mr Moir was understandably anxious about the political slant implied in the article (Mr Hood, the ex-Mayor of Dover also quoted, is a local Labour politician). He therefore put out the attached statement to the Press Association at 1.00 am this morning, to correct the mistakes in the article.

I suggest that the line to take should therefore be that the article is misinformed and misleading, and that the Chairman and Trustees of the fund are entirely content with the arrangements.

Yours ever

Neil

N T E HOYLE
Private Secretary

Storm as tax slashes £1½m 'blood money' off ferry fund

By TED OLIVER

A HUGE tax grab from the Zeebrugge disaster fund sparked a furious row last night.

The Government is set to claw back nearly £500,000 from the £6 million fund. Now Premier Margaret Thatcher faces an outcry from the organisers.

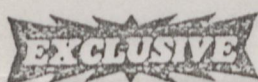
Jim Hood, who was mayor of Dover when the Herald of Free Enterprise sank last March, stormed: "This is blood money. It is bloody sick."

"I cannot believe that even Maggie Thatcher would stoop as low as this. Has the Government no heart?"

Cheques

About 600 survivors and grieving relatives will get cheques from the fund this week.

But fund manager John Greig said last night: "The biggest re-



ipient of the money raised by the public is the Government.

"We have had to pay tax at the highest level on the money we have invested.

"The first cheques we sent out were to orphans and they are going to have to go to court to claim the tax back."

Mr Greig added: "The Government gave the biggest single donation

to the fund — £1 million — but they are getting a lot of that back in tax."

The Government's tax demand does not apply to donations but to the money earned by the fund's investments.

That is taxed at 45 per cent compared with the normal 27 per cent income tax.

Mr Greig said the fund was being taxed under 400-year-old laws.

Mr Hood said: "I hate to think what the people who gave so generously to this fund will think about the tax demand."

Channel Ferry Disaster Fund

Sponsored by Dover District Council

Patrons: Countess Mountbatten of Burma, C.D., J.P., D.L.
Councillor Mrs. Amelia Williamson, Chairman of the Dover District Council

Council Offices, Honeywood Road
Whitfield, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ
or FREEPOST, P.O.Box 1000,
Dover, Kent CT16 1AB

Telephone: Dover (0304) 825141
(FREEFONE 1004)
or 821199 (Council Offices)

Statement via Press Association 1.00 a.m. Tuesday, 9 February 1988

The Chairman of the Channel Ferry Disaster Fund, John Moir, wishes to make it clear that suggestions in certain of today's national newspapers that the Fund Trustees are critical of the tax payable on investment income arising from public donations to the Fund are entirely false.

The Trustees chose to establish the Fund as a discretionary trust rather than as a charity in the full knowledge that such tax would be payable. They have carefully arranged matters so that payments made to orphans and minors will be made from investment interest in order that the tax paid can be reclaimed by these non-taxpayers from the Inland Revenue as an additional benefit.

The Trustees have never been critical of the tax position and, on the contrary, welcomed the prompt donation of £1 million from the Government only 4 days after the Zeebrugge tragedy. This sum greatly exceeds any tax which may be due to the Government from investment proceeds or from royalties on the Ferry-Aid record production.

Contact: John Moir, Chairman of the Trustees, Tel: 0304-821199 or
0304-617873



File SH
CCBE

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 August 1987

Thank you for your letter of 3 August with a note on prosecuting authorities in England and Wales. The Prime Minister was grateful for this.

I am copying this letter to Anthony Langdon (Cabinet Office) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

MARK ADDISON

Philip Mawer, Esq.,
Home Office

SH

CBG

Prime Minister (2)



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

At Cabinet on 23 July, in the
context of Zeebrugge, you said
you would like a full list of
prosecuting authorities. This Home
Office note provides it.
MAY 4/8

3 August 1987

much wider
than I knew
Langdon
MAY

Dear Mark,

In his letter of 23 July, Anthony Langdon said that the Prime Minister would welcome a short note on the range of prosecuting authorities in England and Wales.

I enclose a list which illustrates the wide range of authorities which can institute proceedings. In general, Government Departments have powers to prosecute only to enforce compliance with regulations and to prevent tax evasion and fraudulent claims to benefits.

The Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 preserves the right of a private individual to institute any criminal proceedings, subject only to provisions requiring the prior consent of either the Attorney General or the Director of Public Prosecutions before certain proceedings may be brought (for example, in connection with Official Secrets Act offences).

I am copying this letter to Anthony Langdon and Trevor Woolley.

Yours,

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten flourish]

P J C MAWER

Mark Addison, Esq

PROSECUTING AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Government Department

Crown Prosecution Service	All criminal proceedings, other than "specified proceedings" instituted by the police.
Department of Health and Social Security	Supplementary benefit fraud. National <u>insurance</u> fraud. Failure to pay national insurance contributions.
Department of <u>Employment</u>	<u>Benefit</u> fraud. Prosecutions arising from work of Wages Inspectorate
Customs and Excise	Customs and Excise offences. VAT enforcement.
Inland Revenue	Tax evasion.
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	Non-compliance with <u>agricultural</u> regulations
Department of Trade and Industry	Radio regulatory. Regulation of trade and commerce.
Department of Transport	<u>Driver and vehicle</u> licensing (normally undertaken by the police or CPS). <u>Marine</u> safety.
Home Office	Non-payment of television licences (undertaken by the <u>Post Office</u>).
Ministry of Defence	Military law.
Welsh Office	Matters delegated from central departments (S of S consents to certain highways and agriculture prosecutions)

Public bodies/utilities

Health and Safety Executive

Safety issues generally

Civil Aviation Authority

Air safety

Post Office)

Water boards)

Electricity boards)

British Gas)

British Telecommunications)

Arising from provision of services.

Local authorities/bodies

Police

"Specified proceedings" (minor offences where defendants can plead guilty by post).

Probation Service

Breach of probation orders.

County Councils

Highways.
Education.
Environmental health.
Bye-laws.

District councils

Environmental health.
Planning.
Housing.
Bye-laws.

Other

Professional bodies

Regulation of standards.

Charities

NSPCC - child cruelty.

RSPCA - cruelty to animals.

Private companies

Generally retailers prosecuting shoplifting.

Private individuals

Most frequently common assault

DISASTERS

HEAD OFFICE

ENTERPRISE

3/17

ZEEBRUGGE DISASTER

Line to take:

Clearly this was a massive disaster with the tragic loss of at least 188 lives.

We all remember and thank the Belgian authorities and people for all the magnificent work they did.

We must now urgently study Mr Justice Sheen's findings being reported today.

The Secretary of State for Transport, Paul Channon, is expected to make a Statement in the House at 2.30 pm and will give an account of the report and its recommendations and the action that we propose to take.

24 July 1987



cc Ba

nbpm

CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-~~222~~ 270 0189

K01713

Philip Mawer Esq
Private Secretary to the
Home Secretary
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
SW1

23 July 1987

Dear Philip

At this morning's Cabinet the Transport Secretary briefly reported on the enquiry into the loss of the Herald of Free Enterprise.

One point that came up, though I am not certain that it will be recorded in the minutes, was that the Department of Transport was itself the prosecuting authority for offences of proceeding to sea in an unfit condition. The Prime Minister would, I believe, welcome a short note on the range of prosecuting authorities in England and Wales and I wonder if you could arrange for this to be provided to her office. I think this material may be fairly readily to hand in the Home Office, since it was all reviewed at the time the Crown Prosecution Service was established.

I am sending copies of this letter to Mark Addison and Trevor Woolley.

Yours

Anthony

A J LANGDON



be: BG

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 July 1987

Dear Jon

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

The Prime Minister has seen and noted without comment your Secretary of State's minute of 17 July.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of the Cabinet, to Michael Saunders (Attorney General's Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), Lord Denham (Captain of the Gentlemen-at-Arms) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

Andy

P. A. Bearpark

Jonathan Cunliffe, Esq.,
Department of Transport.

D85



Prime Minister (2)
MEF 17/7

me

Prime Minister

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

You should be aware that the Court of Inquiry looking into the capsizing of the HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE off Zeebrugge will issue its report on Friday 24 July. Mr Justice Sheen plans to deliver it orally at 10.30 am in the Royal Courts of Justice and it is likely to attract a fair amount of public interest.

2. At the beginning of the Inquiry Townsend Thoresen admitted responsibility for the capsizing. The operations of the company, with respect to their safety, management and procedures, were the subject of considerable criticism during the proceedings. Other issues included the speed of the capsizing; the design of these ferries, particularly their vulnerability to water on the vehicle deck; the need to improve procedures for the operation of vehicle deck doors and the counting of passengers; the need for further research into the stability of ferries; and the problem of reaching international agreement on any safety measures in an acceptable timescale. The Department of Transport itself was subject to some criticism principally for not having devoted more resources to vetting and policing operating procedures.

3. Since the hearings were adjourned there has been Parliamentary and media interest in the decision taken some time ago not to prosecute either individuals or the company. The question of whether, and if so when, criminal charges should be brought in relation to matters which are the subject of public inquiries has been considered fully. The advice I have received is that the normal procedure is either for criminal proceedings to be taken in advance of the public inquiry or for immunity to



be granted to witnesses at the inquiry, although in this case no immunity was either asked for or given. In view of the public reaction to the disaster and the paramount need to uncover the facts and extract lessons for the future it was decided to press on with the Inquiry with all possible speed. I am advised that it would be now virtually impossible to decide to prosecute anyone, because any defendant's position would have been prejudiced by the publicity which the hearings attracted. But in view of the importance of the matter I have asked for the Law Officers' confirmation of the advice I have received. It is of course open to the Inquiry to withdraw or suspend the officers' certificates if it judges this appropriate.

4. Since Justice Sheen has chosen to deliver his report on 24 July, I will be unable to make an oral Statement in the House. But I plan to answer a written question later in the day, in which I will make a preliminary response to the Report where I can, and undertake to give the closest and most urgent consideration to the other recommendations.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to other members of the Cabinet, to Patrick Mayhew, David Waddington, Bertie Denham and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

J. Coulter
(Private Secretary)

PP PAUL CHANNON

(approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence).

17 JUL 1987



With the compliments of
HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S
AMBASSADOR

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'E.M.', is located to the right of the main text.

BRITISH EMBASSY
BRUSSELS

L

RESCUE OPERATIONS AT ZEEBRUGGE: THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT BRUSSELS TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

SUMMARY

1. The Townsend Thoresen ferry "The Herald of Free Enterprise" capsized off Zeebrugge on the evening of 6 March 1987 with the loss of around 190 lives. The speed and efficiency of the Belgian rescue operation maximised the number of survivors and ensured excellent medical attention. (Paragraphs 1 - 3)
2. Governor Vanneste's good emergency plan was assisted by a number of fortunate coincidences, including NATO forces on call. Some things, notably the identification and counting of survivors, might have been done better. But Townsend Thoresen's lack of control over numbers should not obscure their massive overall response. (Paragraphs 4 - 6)
3. Zeebrugge was swamped by the media, hampering the crisis centre and intruding on the survivors, though the coverage was generally fair and constructive. (Paragraph 7)
4. All available Embassy staff and their spouses became involved in the first hours, as were British Forces Germany. The British VIP visits, Royal and Ministerial, had a major effect on survivors' and helpers' morale. Valuable reinforcements arrived from Consular Department as requested in the following week. (Paragraphs 8 - 9)
5. Lessons for the future. (Paragraphs 10 - 12)
6. Reciprocal sympathy for the tragedy and gratitude for the efficient rescue operation had a positive effect on British/Belgian relations. Further opportunities will arise to intensify the bilateral links brought into relief by the Herald disaster. (Paragraph 13)

BRITISH EMBASSY

BRUSSELS

18 June 1987

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Secretary of State for Foreign
and Commonwealth Affairs
London SW1

Sir,

RESCUE OPERATIONS AT ZEEBRUGGE: THE HERALD OF FREE ENTREPRISE

1. The Townsend Thoresen ferry "The Herald of Free Enterprise" (8,000 tons: Captain D Lewry) capsized in a calm sea one mile off Zeebrugge East harbour wall at 19.28 hours (local) on Friday 6 March with the loss of around 200 lives.

2. The events that followed were massively reported. It was as though the very familiarity and routine of a Channel crossing magnified the horror of the disaster: thousands of those who heard or watched the media coverage, not to mention many of us who were at the scene of the rescue, had personal experience of the ship or the crossing as holiday-makers, day-trippers, BAOR families, or British expatriates in Brussels and Paris. It seemed unbelievable that such a thing could happen so suddenly: survivors recounted how many went to their deaths with arms folded, apparently unable to realise that the ship really was turning over. The incredible explanation, that the bow doors were left open through a combination of faulty procedures and human error, is still under judicial investigation in both Britain and Belgium. Many aspects of the story will not be clear until these enquiries have reported.

3. Meanwhile any record of the events must rely on the accounts of many helpers who rushed separately to the scene. The involvement of this Embassy is described in the attached Memorandum and Chronology, the latter drawing on information

/given us

given us by the Belgian authorities: that of British Forces Germany and the Emblem Base in the HQ BAOR report which COS/BAOR has kindly agreed I may enclose for your information. I also attach a more detailed chronology of the Embassy staff's involvement and other papers which may be of interest to the Department. Otherwise the outline can be summarised briefly as follows:

(a) Rescue at Sea.

The distress signal which the ship's company had no time to send out was given by an incoming Belgian dredger, the Sanderus, when it saw the capsizing Herald's lights go out at 19.35. At 19.55 the first Belgian Navy helicopter took off from Koksijde to circle the wreck, preceding the rescue operations by the Armed Services from several countries that were coordinated from the Naval Base at Zeebrugge. The first Belgian civilian tugs (Seahorse and Vandamme) reached the wreck within 30 minutes (approximately 20.05) and the first Navy divers were on the wreck at 20.25. The British merchant ship "Duke of Anglia" stopped to pick up survivors on her way in to the port, as did many other small vessels. The first injured were brought to shore at 20.20 by Sea King. The water temperature of 4°C drastically curtailed survival time and by 22.00 most of the ultimate survivors were ashore except for three who were found trapped in an air pocket in the early hours of the morning by a Royal Navy diver. For the total numbers involved see below.

(b) Reception on Land.

The rapid and effective implementation of the Belgian emergency plan ensured that when the first survivors came ashore there were ambulances (supplemented by buses taken straight off the streets) to take them to six local hospitals where emergency wards were standing by for the arrival of the injured. The initial reception arrangements were handled mainly by the Belgian Fire Brigade Service, Gendarmerie, Red Cross, and Townsend Thoresen local employees:

/though

though those who came ashore at the Naval Base were rapidly visited by my Naval/Air Attaché and his wife, who had fortuitously been attending the annual Air Force Ball at the nearby Koksijde base. Those who did not need hospital treatment, or were released after examination, were accommodated in local hotels and at a holiday centre, the Duinse Polders.

(c) Immediate Aftercare.

As the night wore on other services, starting with those mobilised by the Belgian plan of operations, came into action. Townsend Thoresen deployed extra personnel from Dover: Kent Police and Kenyons (Undertakers) representatives moved to Zeebrugge: British Forces Germany activated their office in the port area which normally controls movements to and from the UK via the Emblem Base: innumerable other offers of help poured in. This Embassy set up a forward link in the Townsend Thoresen office and began visiting the hospitals (see paragraph 8 below). At this stage the complex task of counting and identifying survivors and victims who had been brought ashore and dispersed in the confusion of the night took second priority only to the comforting of the survivors and their relatives who began to arrive shortly after.

(d) Royal and Ministerial Visitors.

On arrival at the Zeebrugge crisis centre around midnight I found the Belgian Prime Minister (who lives in Ghent) already there with the Ministers of Communications and Defence. King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola arrived virtually unannounced at about 03.00 and visited some of the survivors at the Naval Base and the Duinse Polders. Prince Albert and Princess Paola visited the command centre and several hospitals the next morning. The British Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Moore, flew over the following morning and the Prime Minister and Mr Thatcher arrived shortly after lunch, followed an hour later by the Duke and Duchess of York. On the following Wednesday, 11 March, the Prince of Wales prefaced his programme at NATO by a visit to the Naval Base and the Queen Fabiola Hospital.

/(e) ...

(e) The Salvage Operations and Further Aftercare.

The salvage operation, undertaken by the Dutch company Smit Tak, began in the week following the accident and may be divided into three stages. Firstly, the preparation for and righting of the Herald, finally achieved on 7 April after several postponements as a result of bad weather; then the making water-tight and preparing of the Herald for re-floating and towing into Zeebrugge Harbour, achieved on 27 April; and, finally, the transfer on 11 May to the more extensive facilities at Vlissingen in the Netherlands for further searches and salvage. More bodies were recovered, particularly at the completion of the first stage of the salvage operation, when 111 bodies were recovered from areas inaccessible to the divers while the wreck was on its side. Careful preparations were coordinated by Governor Vanneste in advance for the identification and return of the bodies and the handling of relatives and of the press. Once again the Governor drew on a wide range of assistance, including Royal Navy divers, Kent Police and Kenyons undertakers and British Forces Germany. The Embassy again maintained a presence in Zeebrugge at the crucial times.

Effectiveness of the Rescue Operation

4. The speed and efficiency of the rescue operation became apparent almost at once. The Belgians may even have surprised themselves, since the Heysel football disaster two years before had shown up many weaknesses in their capacity to handle emergencies. There were of course several elements of good luck in the midst of tragedy. Had the ship not slewed away from the main shipping lane as she began to capsize, or capsized a few hundred yards further off shore, there would have been no sand-bank to prevent her turning completely turtle and very few survivors. The lucky coincidence of two military exercises furnished extra resources: a Standing Naval Force Channel (STANAVFORCHAN) exercise had several mine-hunters (including HMS Hurworth) with their divers in port at Ostend; and a NATO Signals exercise (WINTEX) meant extra communications equipment was available even in the harbour-master's office. It also providentially meant a lesser number of BAOR servicemen were free to travel to the UK on that sailing. NATO cooperation could hardly have been better illustrated than when the Captain of HMS Hurworth put to sea with a mixed crew containing only one of his own officers, a Norwegian officer as navigator, and half as many Dutch as British ratings. But none of this could have

/come

come into play so effectively if there had not already existed a master plan for such emergencies, drawn up under the authority of the Governor of West Flanders, Mr Olivier Vanneste, who assumed personal control of the crisis centre from early on (20.10 hours) and coordinated all subsequent stages of the military and civilian operations.

Problems of Identification

5. There were of course some things that with hindsight might have been done better. Uncertainty about the total numbers involved was due to a number of factors. The survivors came ashore at various places in different batches and were dispersed at once to different locations. All British, some in a state of shock, they were asked for their names by various personnel, all of them Belgian, from Townsend Thoresen, the Belgian Gendarmerie and others. Belgian hospitals register women only under their maiden names. All this resulted in double counting and faulty transcriptions whose existence was fairly obvious from the start. We concentrated our initial effort on assisting Townsend Thoresen to compile lists from the telephonic reports they were receiving from their staff at the various points of reception. But even this was complicated by the fact that the Belgian Gendarmerie were conducting a parallel exercise and at one stage actually asked Townsend Thoresen to stop recording names. Between midnight and 03.00 on Saturday morning Townsend Thoresen with our help established provisional lists. We telefaxed them to the FCO at the same time as Townsend Thoresen transmitted them to the Kent Police. Subsequently the Belgian Gendarmerie came up with their own list, which turned out to be simply a copy of the one we had established earlier in the night.

6. The Kent Police were able to bring greater resources to bear on the problems of identification and over the following days collated evidence they received about possible victims from more than 7,000 public enquiries and from other sources. BAOR used their data processors to register and check details about servicemen and their families. But Townsend Thoresen's decision to stick to their initial estimates both of the number saved (408) and of the number on board (543) led to confusion and conflict with other evidence. In the event the figures that are available today (188 known to have died, at least 5 still missing and about 350 saved) shows that their initial figure for those on board was not far out. Unfortunately the initial uncertainty had lasted too long. But this should not obscure the fact that Townsend Thoresen's contribution to the rescue and aftercare operations was massive and generous.

/Media Interest ...

Media Interest and Interference

7. Representatives of the media, especially British, were on the scene within a couple of hours, coming from Brussels and Paris as well as the UK. Besieged with journalists 'phoning out and enquirers 'phoning in, the crisis centre was hampered by the blocking of its switchboard. At 01.30 on Saturday morning, after a running series of corridor briefings as information filtered through, Mr Martens and other Belgian officials gave a press conference. Most of those present were from the British media so I acted as interpreter and was thus able to put in a first few words of appreciation for the Belgian rescue operation. In the ensuing hours the media pressed in on the survivors wherever they could get access to them, and this became one of the major headaches for Governor Vanneste and his team. My staff and I did our best to reconcile the media's need for information with the victims' desire for privacy: we did not always succeed, but I subsequently received a letter of appreciation from the Foreign Editor of BBC Television for the Embassy's "never-ending patience" and "tremendous service in very difficult circumstances". On the whole the media, and especially BBC, coverage, which continued in one form or another throughout the salvage operations, was fair and constructive though one could have wished it to be less intrusive.

Role of the Embassy

8. As described in the attached Memorandum, virtually all available staff and their spouses became involved in the first few hours. Obviously there is no way that an Embassy, even a bigger one than this, could hope to assume effective responsibility for large-scale operations, which in any case must be conducted by the host Government authorities. Equally, an immediate Consular presence is expected by British citizens and useful to the local authorities for liaison purposes. There is thus bound to be a path to tread between meeting the relatively high profile expectations of the British media without appearing to assume responsibilities which could not be discharged or simply getting in the way. After the first hours of all hands to the pumps, our forces were deployed in three main directions:

- (i) assisting Townsend Thoresen and the Kent Police in compiling and checking lists, arranging legal and consular formalities etc.;
- (ii) visiting and making direct contact with as many survivors in hospitals or hotels as possible: in this a major role was played by the representatives of British Forces Germany, with whom we coordinated closely;

/(iii) ...

(iii) organising the VIP visits from the UK referred to in paragraph 3(d) above. At times this used a high proportion of our resources and may have reduced the profile of Embassy activity observable by the public. But it was fully justified: the rapidity, not to mention the compassion, of the VIP visits had a major morale effect on both the survivors and those who were working to succour them. The Prime Minister's prompt and generous tribute to the rescue workers was widely reported. All this will have left a lasting impression in Belgium.

9. We did not ask for reinforcements during the first two days, since it was a weekend and we could therefore afford to deploy all our available resources. However, the assistance which Consular Department promptly provided from the Monday enabled us to maintain up to three Consular officers at Zeebrugge over the following weeks while using the reinforcements to handle other current consular business in Brussels.

Implications for Future Planning

10. As it is unlikely that an accident of this nature would be closely repeated, there is little scope for detailed planning in the light of Zeebrugge of the Embassy's role in response to a future large-scale emergency. However, it underlines the importance of a clear understanding of the responsibilities and capacities of the local and other authorities which could be called upon and how the Embassy could most promptly and efficiently make contact with them, draw on their resources and define its own role - a role which should, I suspect, not differ greatly from that which I have described above.

11. As demonstrated in practice at Zeebrugge, the immediate response to a large-scale disaster in Belgium is the responsibility of the provincial authorities and ultimately the provincial Governor, working according to his own disaster plan. This varies from province to province, but plans are coordinated between adjoining provinces and, in the case of provinces with a national frontier, with the regional authorities of the neighbouring state concerned. The first step of an Embassy advance party should thus be to establish contact with the provincial authorities' crisis centre. The next consideration is the large role which BAOR may play as a result of the resources deployed to their lines of communication through Belgium, centred at HQ BR Comm Z at Emblem camp near Antwerp.

/Not only

Not only are their resources of transport and manpower (including chaplains and other welfare personnel) available, but also their back-up facilities (including computers, which on this occasion were deployed to help with the processing of relatives' enquiries etc.). As Zeebrugge showed, it is likely that an emergency at any of the Channel or adjacent North Sea ports or their approaches will involve considerable numbers of British service personnel and their families. I have accordingly recommended to the Chief of Staff at HQ BAOR that coordination of emergency planning between Embassies and BAOR be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Commanders in Chief Committee (Germany) attended by Ambassadors.

12. I believe the Department of Transport intend to study the Belgian contingency planning, on which we have given them a preliminary report, to see what lessons might be learned. Governor Vanneste is, as might be expected, reviewing details of his own emergency plans in the light of the disaster: for example, increasing the telephone capacity of designated crisis centres in view of the flood of enquiries received. Additionally, it is for consideration in London whether our response to a future large-scale disaster of this kind would be enhanced by direct bilateral or multilateral contact on emergency planning with Belgium and the adjacent coastal states. I believe that for certain contingencies - e.g. oil pollution - this already exists. At Zeebrugge the international response to the MayDay call and other direct contact between the appropriate military and civilian services rapidly brought in significant reinforcements from outside Belgium. We are not in a position to judge from here if improvements are possible.

Implications for British/Belgian Relations

13. The humane efficiency of the Belgian rescue operation, combined with the surge of sympathy which the survivors experienced from all quarters in Belgium, were positive aspects of this tragedy. Reciprocal feelings of concern and gratitude, well reflected in the media, generated a new warmth in relations between the two peoples. Paradoxically, the second British disaster in Belgium has gone a long way to lighten memories of the Heysel: perhaps because this time gallantry and efficiency appeared on both sides. Recognition of individual acts of valour and of the overall Belgian rescue operation, which are under separate consideration, will no doubt perpetuate these feelings. Spontaneous subscriptions by both Belgians and British expatriates to the Dover Fund; the British Community's raising of funds for the Flanders Red Cross in recognition of

/their services;

their services; and other thank you gestures within Belgium have had a similar effect. I shall be suggesting other ways in which, when the immediate associations of Zeebrugge with tragedy have worn off, we might find opportunities next year to commemorate and intensify the links between Britain and Belgium, particularly Bruges, which "The Herald of Free Enterprise" so dramatically brought into relief.

14. I am sending copies of this despatch and Memorandum, and Chronology only to H.M. Representatives at all European Community and NATO posts and to the Secretary of the Commanders in Chief Committee (Germany).

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully

Peter Petrie

Peter Petrie

MEMORANDUM

THE ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Disaster

1. At about 1915 (local time) on Friday 6 March the Townsend Thoresen ferry "Herald of Free Enterprise" left the Townsend terminal in Zeebrugge, with about 543 passengers and crew on board. At 1928 having taken in water through the bow doors which had been left open, the Herald turned through 150 degrees to starboard and capsized onto its port side, coming to rest on a sand bank, about one mile off Zeebrugge New Mole.

The Rescue

2. The alarm was raised within minutes by the Belgian dredger Sanderus. The Port Control and Pilot Service alerted the emergency services and the navy, and Radio Ostend put out a Mayday message. At 2010 two harbour tugs arrived on the scene and began the rescue of survivors, together with the first of three Belgian Airforce Sea King helicopters which had taken off from Koksijde at 1955. The first of 28 Belgian Navy divers were dropped on to the wreck at 2025 and the Belgian naval vessels Ekster and Krekel immediately offered assistance. Available Pilot Service, Police, merchant and fishing vessels in the area and in port, including the British merchant ship, Duke of Anglia, were asked to join the rescue.

3. The rapidity of the Belgian forces' response, and the immediate reaction of Belgian naval vessels which had been near the Herald when she went over, with further units brought up soon afterwards, was no doubt helped by the fact that Exercise Wintex was in progress: more officers were in key command posts than would have been on a normal Friday evening (however, contrary to press reports at the time, there were no troops participating in this command exercise). It was also fortuitous that the Belgian Airforce Ball at Koksijde was in progress on the same evening with the result that Belgian air crew - and the NA/AA and Mrs Landeryou - could quickly be mobilised. Additionally it was fortuitous that HMS Hurworth was in Ostend with STANAVFORCHAN on a rest period. Although on 24 hours readiness for sea, Lt Cdr Fanshaw put her to sea within an hour, with a midshipman as First Lieutenant, and having called together a crew from naval vessels of other nations taking part in the exercise and arrived off Zeebrugge to join the search for survivors and casualties at 0130 on 7 March. He had already sent his diver, AB Fullen, who later rescued the last three survivors from the wreck, on ahead.

4. FGS Göttingen, also in Ostend with STANAVFORCHAN moved to Zeebrugge with HMS Hurworth. HMNLS Middelburg, exercising separately off the Dutch coast, reached Ostend slightly earlier and became the first scene of action commander. The French minesweeper Capricorne, in the Pas de Calais en route to Cherbourg, was put on stand-by following an offer of help from the French navy, but she was not in the event called in. Naval divers from Portsmouth and Plymouth were flown by helicopter directly to Zeebrugge to take part in the rescue. Civilian divers from Belgium and the Netherlands travelled to offer their services: in all, some 35 British and Dutch divers joined in the rescue. On land, the civil authorities responded according to the province emergency plan prepared by the Governor of West Flanders, Olivier Vanneste who arrived on the scene to take overall control at about 2010. Police, fire and port emergency services were stood to and fleets of ambulances - and three commandeered buses - were brought up to take the casualties to the six hospitals alerted in the area. Red Cross volunteers, many of them young people from all walks of life, comforted survivors. The detail of the emergency planning was commendable (Governor Vanneste remarked subsequently, with a measure of pride, that many survivors already had blankets by the time they reached the shore). Hospitals coped in an exemplary fashion with the great influx of casualties, and doctors were sent to the hotels Novotel and Duinse Polders to which the uninjured were transferred. A temporary mortuary was established in the naval base.

5. The Belgian Prime Minister, Wilfried Martens, decided to travel to Zeebrugge as soon as he heard news of the disaster. He also called in the Minister of Communications, De Croo, and the Minister of Defence, de Donnée.

6. As soon as the news reached the Ambassador he ordered the Embassy Duty Officer (Mr Burrowes) and the Pro Consul (Ms Davies) to set off at once for Zeebrugge, which is about 1½ hours drive from Brussels. A rear link in Brussels was set up by the Acting Head of Chancery and the Ambassador, the DA and the Consul General set off for Zeebrugge/Brugge shortly afterwards using his car telephone to receive reports en route from the advance party via the rear link. At Zeebrugge the Ambassador visited the Townsend Thoresen offices and Navy Base operations room before joining Belgian Ministers at the crisis centre, where in the early hours of 7 March he interpreted into English at a press conference given by Mr Martens.

7. King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola likewise decided to visit Zeebrugge during the first night and arrived at about 0300 on 7 March, staying for about an hour with survivors. (NA/AA's report at Annex B.9). Prince Albert and Princess Paola visited the following morning.

8. There was also an immediate and overwhelming response from members of the public in the Zeebrugge area and throughout Belgium. The day after the disaster, the Embassy received repeated phone calls offering donations of blood or material assistance (these were directed on to the Red Cross). Thereafter many messages of condolence were received from officials and members of the public (Annex E). The Belgian National Assembly observed one minutes silence. The Brussels and Antwerp British Community Associations opened appeals to contribute to the Dover Fund and subsequently contributed to the Belgian Red Cross.

9. Figures originally provided by Townsend Thoresen (and used publicly on 9 March by the Secretary of State for Transport) indicated that 408 survivors had been rescued, 53 people were known to have died and 62 were believed to be still missing. However the figure for survivors included some double-counting. The actual figure is now believed to be about 350 of the 543 thought to have been on board. Partly because of the inflated figure for survivors and partly because the exact number on board was not known with precision, the initial figure for people dead/missing was well short of the actual figure (now known to be 188 dead and at least 5 still missing).

Reactions of the British Authorities

10. Having spoken to Mr Martens, Mrs Thatcher decided to travel to Zeebrugge on the afternoon of 7 March. Mr Thatcher accompanied her. The Ambassador, Mr Moore, who had arrived during the morning, and Mr de Croo, met her at Ostend Airport at 1410. The party travelled by helicopter passing over the wreck to the crisis centre before visiting two of the hospitals in which the majority of the casualties were being cared for. At a press conference with Mr Martens at St Jan's Hospital, Bruges, the Prime Minister spoke warmly of the Belgian authorities' handling of the rescue. She repeated her thanks for an operation which she said was the most efficiently conducted international rescue operation she had ever seen.

11. In a subsequent letter to Mr Martens, the Prime Minister expressed her deep gratitude to the Belgian government, the provincial and local authorities, the hospitals and emergency services and to the Belgian people as a whole for the rescue operation. She said that the speed of the response undoubtedly saved many lives and prevented an even worse tragedy. The standards of medical and humanitarian care provided to the survivors could not have been bettered. The operation had been made up of countless acts of personal heroism and dedication. Time and again the survivors she visited in hospital had expressed their gratitude for everything which had been done for them.

12. The Duke and Duchess of York, representing HM The Queen travelled direct to Zeebrugge Naval Base by helicopter of the Queen's Flight and arrived shortly before 1600. Accompanied by Mr Noel-Clarke, they followed a similar itinerary to the Prime Minister's. Their concern and sympathy did much to comfort the survivors they saw.

13. The Prince of Wales, who was already due to visit Belgium on 11 March, decided to arrive earlier so as to visit Zeebrugge. The Ambassador met him at Ostend Airport and flew over the wreck of the Herald to Zeebrugge Naval Base, where Governor Vanneste presented members of his crisis staff and of the military and civilian services who had been involved in the rescue, including Lt Cdr Fanshawe of HMS Hurworth. HRH then visited the Fabiola Hospital in Blankenberge before travelling on to Brussels to continue his programme of calls on Mr Martens, TM the King and Queen of the Belgians and the rest of his programme.

Involvement Of The Embassy

14. During the first weekend following the disaster, up to fourteen members of staff at a time were deployed in Zeebrugge with more keeping the Embassy manned in Brussels. In the first place the role of staff in Zeebrugge was in liaison with Townsend Thoresen who bore the brunt of material assistance to the victims; the Kent Police, who soon established an office on the spot; HQ BAOR and HQ BR Comm 2, who rapidly activated their office in the TT building; and with the Belgian authorities, to establish as quickly as could be in the difficult circumstances an authoritative list of both survivors and casualties and to transmit this information back to Consular Department; and, following on from this, to make direct contact with next of kin where specifically requested (see also reports by Mr Peate, Miss Dutton and Mrs Davies, Annex B 12, 8, 6 and 5).

15. Complementing this role Embassy staff also visited and were subsequently stationed at the six hospitals and three hotels to which casualties and survivors were referred, and to the temporary mortuary, to comfort the injured and the bereaved and to help in other ways as appropriate. Particularly on the first night following the accident and before survivors had been re-patriated, staff and spouses helped to comfort these also.

16. After the first weekend, Mr Peate and Consular staff maintained a permanent presence in Zeebrugge until 13 March assisting TT, on whom the principal burden for practical and financial assistance, accommodation and re-patriation for the survivors, as well as for their friends and relatives who had come to Belgium, continued to fall; by visiting and advising those affected; and by raising their problems either with TT or with the local authorities. Once the wreck had been righted, more bodies recovered, and relatives had again travelled to Belgium, Mrs Davies followed by Miss Dutton returned to Zeebrugge and stayed from 5-13 April (Miss Dutton's report appears at Annex B.7).

17. The Information Officer, Mr Bates, was heavily involved during the first 48 hours in responding to the intense press interest. Subsequently arrangements for handling both the Belgian and the British press were firmly taken over by Governor Vanneste (see paragraph 19 below).

18. The Embassy was also involved in making arrangements for the visits of the Prime Minister, the Duke and Duchess of York, the Prince of Wales, the Minister of Transport, Mr Justice Sheen and his enquiry team and Baroness Trumpington; and for accompanying them during these visits.

The Role of the Governor of West Flanders

19. Following the first weekend, Governor Vanneste continued to oversee personally the arrangements made for the salvage operation and the recovery of the remaining victims from the wreck competently and meticulously. His crisis committee met eight times under his chairmanship between 13 March and 24 April. And his staff showed considerable helpfulness in responding to our requests in connection with the visits of the Prince of Wales, British Ministers and others to Zeebrugge during that period.

Handling of Survivors and Relatives

20. In liaison with the local authorities, the Kent Police assumed responsibility for compiling an accurate list of survivors and casualties and informing next of kin. The Embassy and Consular Department assisted in this. In the first 48 hours after the accident, the Kent Police Incident Control Centre in Maidstone had received about 7,000 enquiries from worried relatives. From these, they compiled the most authoritative list of the missing to match against reports coming in from the hospitals etc in Zeebrugge.

21. TT took immediate steps to re-patriate survivors and arranged for relatives to travel to Zeebrugge to identify victims. Over the weekend they arranged two charter flights to re-patriate the great majority of the survivors. Once the Herald had been righted, they arranged hotel accommodation for relatives travelling to Zeebrugge. Belgian and British authorities followed closely the identification of victims. The Dover Pathologist visited Zeebrugge and a team of Home Office pathologists and Kent Police responsible to him examined the bodies together with the Belgian authorities. Information supplied by families including photographs and medical and dental records were matched by computer with information obtained from the autopsies. Only in a few instances was it necessary for families to be asked to identify bodies and this was often possible by reference to clothing and personal effects. Bodies were embalmed by the UK mortician Christopher Kenyon and Governor Vanneste drew up plans for the transfer to Zeebrugge of bodies and objects

from the ferry, rather than their being held in the commune where found. He also successfully obtained from the Dutch authorities the release of three bodies washed up in Zeeland on 21 March. Miss Dutton's account of the handling of bodies and care of relatives after the righting of the vessel is at Annex B.7.

Memorial Services

22. A multi-denominational prayer service was arranged at short notice in Zeebrugge on the morning of 9 March. Belgium was represented by Prince Philippe and although Mr Martens had only been informed shortly beforehand, by the Education Minister (Flemish Sector) Coens, Public Works Minister Olivier, Governor Vanneste and Burgomaster Van Acker. The Ambassador and Mrs Petrie attended, as did the DA, the Consul, the Pro Consul and the two Commanders in Chief BAOR. The Consul attended a private service at sea for families of the victims on 10 March. The Ambassador attended the anglican Memorial service held in Ostend on 21 March conducted by the Suffragan Bishop of Europe. The national memorial service, conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was held on 15 April in Canterbury Cathedral and attended by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and HRH the Princess Anne, the Prime Minister, Secretary of State, other government Ministers and opposition leaders. Governor Vanneste also attended

The Inquiries

23. Judge D'Hoest was charged by the Belgian authorities with conducting the criminal investigation required automatically by Belgian law into the causes of the accident. He tasked Belgian gendarmerie and other appropriate services to collect all relevant information from the wreck. Separately, the Secretary of State for Transport ordered a full formal investigation into the accident. This inquiry, under the Admiralty Judge, Mr Justice Sheen, began its formal sitting on 27 April. The two Judges met in Dover on 25 March and D'Hoest agreed to make available all appropriate information to the British Inquiry. Both inquiries are still proceeding.

/The Media

The Media

24. Hundreds of journalists and photographers were attracted to the site within hours of the disaster hampering the work of the crisis centre by swamping the telephone system. Media interest remained at a high level for some weeks afterwards. Particularly during VIP visits on 7 March, patients and their relatives had to be shielded at times from reporters invading hospitals. The media also caused considerable distress at the mortuary and at the Zeebrugge church services on 9 March. In consultation with TT and the Belgian authorities, who were quite effective at controlling the worst onrushes of the media, we endeavoured to balance the latter's need for access and information with respect for the victims (the Ambassador received a letter of thanks from the Foreign Editor of BBC television referring to the Embassy's "never-ending patience", "cooperation", and "tremendous service in very difficult circumstances"). The Ambassador took part in the RTBF live television programme Journal Télévisé, together with Mr De Croo, on 8 March having already given various other interviews to British and Belgian TV and radio channels during visits to hospitals. He was also interviewed in the news magazine of "Tele-Bruxelles" the following weekend.

25. After the first weekend, Governor Vanneste and his press office, together with the Belgian Navy press service, made careful arrangements for the media at peak times of interest, eg Mr Justice Sheen's visit to Zeebrugge, and particularly the righting and re-floating of the Herald, when Belgian naval vessels were made available to the press. This ensured discreet coverage while satisfying the media requirements - despite Governor Vanneste's earlier inclination for a complete prohibition of media access to the salvage operation.

List of Annexes:

- A : Chronology
- B : Movements of Embassy staff, and the latter's personal reports
- C : House of Commons statement by Secretary of State for Transport, 9 March
- D : Diagram illustrating the righting of the Herald
- E : Messages of condolence
- F : HQ BAOR report on the disaster (without Annexes)

ANNEX A: CHRONOLOGY (All Times Local)

Friday 6 March 1987

- c. 1915 Townsend Thoresen ferry Herralld of Free Enterprise (8000T, Capt David Lewry) departs Townsend terminal, Zeebrugge, for Dover Eastern Docks.
- 1928 Having taken in water through open bow-doors, the Herald turns through 150° to starboard and capsizes on to port side, coming to rest on a sand-bank, 1 mile off Zeebrugge new mole.
- 1935 Alarm raised by dredger Sanderus. Port Authority alerts pilot service. Alarm then raised with emergency services (fire, ambulances, police, gendarmerie) mobilised. Navy, and Radio Ostend, which puts out Mayday message. Local shipping despatched to the scene. Crisis centre in port authority building activated.
- 2010 Harbour tugs Seahorse and Vandamme, and first of three Belgian Airforce Sea King helicopters (which left Koksijde at 1955) arrive on the scene. West Flanders Governor Vanneste assumes personal control at crisis centre.
- 2020 First survivors landed by BAF Sea King.
- 2025 Belgian navy divers dropped on to wreck. Casualties transferred to the following hospitals:
- A Z St Jan Van Hooyen, Brugge
 - St Jozef Kliniek, Brugge
 - Fabiolaziekenhuis, Blankenberge
 - O L V Ter Linder, Knokke-Heist
 - Elisabeth Ziekenhuis, Sysele-Damme
- and the following reception centres:
- Duinse Polders Hotel . Blankenberge
 - Novotel, Bruges
 - Olympia Hotel, Bruges

This dispersal makes accurate listing and enumeration impossible.

- 2135 Consul sees BBC news flash. Telephones Ambassador who orders Duty Officer and consular staff to Zeebrugge.
- 2205 Mr Burrowes (Duty Officer) and Miss Davies (Pro Consul) leave by car for Zeebrugge. Mr Piddington (Consul General) leaves by car to hospitals in Brugge area. Consul mans out-of-hour direct telephone line in Brussels.
- 2230 Royal Netherlands navy vessel exercising off the Dutch coast moves to Zeebrugge: HMNLS Middelburg becomes scene of action commander.
- Divers from HMS Hurworth (Lt Cdr Fanshawe) (mine-hunter part of Standing Naval Forces Channel - STANAVFORCHAN), in Ostend for a rest period, sends divers to Zeebrugge by land and moves up to Zeebrugge with skeleton, international crew accompanied by German mine hunter, FGS Göttingen, also in Ostend with STANAVFORCHAN.
- 2245 Ambassador and DA leave brussels by car.
- 2250 Two RAF/RN Sea King helicopters with naval divers from Plymouth and Portsmouth arrive Zeebrugge.
- 2330 HMS Hurworth and FGS Göttingen arrive Zeebrugge.
- by 2330 Prime Minister Martens, Transport Minister De Croo, Defence Minister De Donnea in Zeebrugge.
- 2345 Embassy forward link set up in TT Manager's outer office (for further details of Embassy staff deployment see Annex B).
- By midnight, 7 bodies recovered.

Saturday 7 March

- 0130 Mr Martens and other Belgian ministers give press conference in the crisis centre in the Port Authority Offices at which the Ambassador translates into English.
- 0300 King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola visit the crisis centre, and survivors in Zeebrugge naval base.
- c. 0300 A B Fullen, diver from HMS Hurworth, rescues last three survivors trapped in cabins.

- c.1000 Prince Albert and Princess Paola visit Zeebrugge.
- 1040 Mr Moore, Secretary of State for Transport arrives Ostend airport. Met by Ambassador and Mr De Croo. Transfers by Belgian Airforce helicopter via the wreck of the Herald to Zeebrugge crisis centre.
- 1100 Mrs Thatcher, having spoken to Mr Martens by telephone, announces intention to visit Zeebrugge during the weekend.
- 1410 Prime Minister and Mr Thatcher arrive Ostend. Met by Ambassador, Mr Moore, Mr De Croo and flown by BAF helicopter via the Herald to Zeebrugge crisis centre where she is met by Mr Martens.
- 1520 Following briefing at Zeebrugge, Prime Minister's party visits St Jan Hospital (Brugge) and Fabiola (Blankenberge) Hospital.
- 1550 Duke and Duchess of York arrive by Queen's Flight helicopter at Zeebrugge Naval Base. Met by AA/NA Cdr Herteleer, and Counsellor (Chancery). Meet RN divers returning from work on the wreck. Visit crisis centre and visit Fabiola Hospital (Blankenberge) and OLV Hospital (Knokke) accompanied by Counsellor (Chancery).
- 1840 Prime Minister's party departs Ostend Airport.
- 1915 Duke of York's party departs Ostend Airport.
- 1945 Mr Moore departs Ostend Airport, after further visit to crisis centre.
- 2030 British Caledonian charter flight departs Ostend Airport for Gatwick with first group of survivors.
- During the day, 43 bodies recovered (total 50).

/Sunday 8 March

Sunday 8 March

- 0300 British Embassy office in Zeebrugge receives the Kent Police's first full casualty/survivors list, which still includes some double-counting.
- 1030 Embassy staff coordination meeting at the Ambassador's residence. Staff then redisperse to Zeebrugge/Embassy.
- 1200 Ambassador and Transport Minister De Croo take part in live RTBF broadcast "Journal Télévisé", interviewed by Henri Coenjarets.
- 1900 Second British Caledonian charter flight repatriates more survivors, leaving 22 hospitalized in Zeebrugge area.

Three more bodies recovered (total 53).

Monday 9 March

- 1200 Multi-denominational service at Zeebrugge Parish Church. The Catholic Bishop of Bruges and the Anglican Bishop of Dover officiate. Sir Jeffrey Sterling, Chairman of P and O, read the lesson. Belgium represented by Prince Philippe, Governor Vanneste of West Flanders, Education Minister (Flemish Sector) Coens, Public Works Minister Olivier, Bruges/Zeebrugge Mayor Van Acke. Mr Clinton-Davis represent the European Commission. The Ambassador and Mrs Petrie, The DA, the Consul, Pro-Consul and the two Commanders-in-Chief BAOR represent the UK. Many survivors and families attend.

Mr Moore, Secretary of Transport makes statement on the disaster in the House of Commons (Annex C). Pays tribute to the speedy response of the Belgian authorities without which the casualties would have been much heavier. Announces that a team of Department of Transport Marine Surveyors under Captain Vale have begun preliminary inquiry and that formal investigation will be conducted under the Admiralty Judge, Mr Justice Sheen. Also announces immediate programme of checks on roll-on, roll-off ships using UK ports. Announces £1 million government contribution to the Channel Ferry Disaster Fund set-up by Dover District Council.

/Belgian

Belgian Government issues statement expressing condolences to the British Government and families of victims of the disaster and paying tribute to the rescue services.

Wednesday 11 March

HRH the Prince of Wales, coming to Belgium on a previously arranged visit to NATO, re-schedules his arrival in order to visit Zeebrugge. Met at Ostend Airport by the Ambassador. Flight in Queen's Flight helicopter over the wreck before being met at Zeebrugge Naval Base by Cdr Vandeneicken, base commander, and Cdr Hertelaer, Chief of Staff to Commander, Belgian Naval Operations. Met at Naval Base Officers' Mess by Governor Vanneste who then presents members of his crisis staff and of civilian and military services which participated in the rescue. HRH then visits casualties and their relatives still in the Fabiola Hospital, Blankenberge before travelling on to Brussels where he is able again to express thanks for the Belgian response to the disaster to Prime Minister Martens, and to the King and Queen of the Belgians with whom he lunched.

EC makes emergency grant of 250,000 ecus (c. £172,500) for families of the dead and casualties to be paid into the Dover District Council's Disaster Fund.

Friday 13 March

Governor Vanneste's Crisis Committee, bringing together all the local civil and military organisations involved in the response to the disaster, begins establishment of procedures for handling of bodies and debris coming from the wreck.

Embassy Consular presence withdrawn from Zeebrugge; regular contact maintained with Townsend Thoresen office from Brussels; and consular staff continued to visit Zeebrugge as required.

/Saturday 21 March

Saturday 21 March

Anglican Memorial Service in Ostend. Conducted by the Suffragan Bishop of Europe. Attended by the Ambassador and members of the Embassy staff.

Three bodies from the Herald washed up in Zeeland, bringing total to 60. Dutch coroners initially unwilling to release them despite requests from the Belgian authorities.

Monday 23 March

Mr Moore, Secretary of State for Transport visits Zeebrugge. Met by the Ambassador at Ostend Airport. Briefed in Zeebrugge Port Authority offices on the salvage operation by Mr Martin, local General Manager, Townsend Thoresen, and by Mr Wallenkamp, of Smit-Tak the salvage contractors. Calls on Governor Vanneste who explains procedures for recovery and handling of bodies; and his arrangements for press.

Tuesday 24 March

Dutch authorities agree to release bodies washed up in Zeeland, waiving normal requirement for identification where recovered.

Wednesday 25 March

Mr Justice Sheen and members of the Inquiry team travel from Dover to Calais on the Herald's sister ship the Spirit of Free Enterprise, having met the Belgian Investigating Judge (Judge d'Hoest) before leaving Dover. On reaching Zeebrugge, Mr Justice Sheen is taken on a harbour tug for a circuit of the wreck with a Townsend Thoresen technical superintendent who explains the procedure for righting the Herald. Mr Justice Sheen and party then return by TT ferry from Zeebrugge to Dover. Kent Police issue statement urging relatives not to travel to Belgium to identify bodies unless asked to do so by the Kent Police.

Friday 27 March

Further meeting of Governor Vanneste's crisis committee (attended by the Consul). Governor over-rules objections by Belgian civilian units (fire brigade, Gendarmerie) reporting to the investigating Judge, in announcing that recovery of bodies from the wreck when righted would be carried out by Belgian Navy and RN divers, guided as required by TT and Smit-Tak personnel.

/Sunday 5 April

Sunday 5 April

Renewed consular presence in Zeebrugge (at Novotel) in preparation for the righting of the Herald. (See Annex B.)

Tuesday 7 April

After repeated postponements caused by bad weather, Herald pulled upright in five-hour operation by means of two barges, each anchored to the sea-bed by eight pylons and attached to the Herald by cables welded to 32 strong points on her port side and each exerting a force of 3,000 tonnes; Herald prevented from dragging along the sea-bed, and raised: initially, by three sheerlegs on the far side (see diagram, Annex D).

Press Arrangements:

Belgian military helicopters for pooled TV coverage and naval vessels for other pressmen, as well as a viewing point on the harbour's eastern breakwater, made available by the Belgian authorities. All press kept a minimum of 500 m from the wreck.

Recovery of Bodies:

Seven RN divers under Lt Cmdr Jack Burkitt, and 12 Belgian Navy divers begin recovery of bodies from the decks above the waterline (ie A-C decks). In parallel, teams coordinated by Judge D'Hoest begin their search for his investigation into the cause of the accident.

Bodies recovered from the wreck taken to Zeebrugge Naval Base for identification by British pathologists and Kent Police reporting to the Dover Coroner, working closely with Belgian experts. Bodies then held in refrigerated trucks until embalmed by Kenyons Morticians, then released to mortuary in St Jan's Hospital, Brugge. There available for viewing by relatives if requested before transfer by Townsend Thoresen to Dover.

Despite Kent Police statement, a small number of relatives travel to Zeebrugge in addition to those called forward by Kent Police. Accommodated in Novotel, Brugge by Townsend Thoresen as well as others travelling under their own arrangements. Arrangements for the relatives coordinated by Governor Vanneste with the close involvement of British Forces Antwerp. In addition to direct army participation (including provision of transport),

/those

those involved in the plan include Townsend Thoresen, British and Belgian Red Cross, Kent Social Services and British clergy.

Thursday 9 April

111 bodies recovered from the wreck in the first three days after righting. With the 61 recovered earlier, current total now 172. About 20 relatives being accommodated by Townsend Thoresen.

Admiral Sir Nicholas Hunt, GNCHAN, visits RN divers.

Wednesday 15 April

National Memorial Service in Canterbury Cathedral, conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, HRH the Princess Anne, the Prime Minister other government Ministers, and opposition leaders, Governor Vanneste represents Belgium.

Mrs Smet, Belgian State Secretary for the Environment, visits Belgian Research Vessel Belgica which has been monitoring pollution levels in the vicinity of the wreck since the accident. Mrs Smet states that although five of the lorries on board contained toxic substances, tests carried out in the vicinity of the Herald have all been negative. (However, some Belgian newspapers headline concern at toxic substances still on board the vessel).

Monday 20 April

Target date for re-floating the Herald passes because of "technical difficulties".

Friday 24 April

First attempt to re-float Herald fails as she proves not to be water-tight and one lifting cable parts.

Monday 27 April

Herald re-floated and towed to berth inside outer breakwater of Zeebrugge Harbour. Search by RN and Belgian Navy divers resumes: four more bodies recovered bring total to 182.

/Inquiry

Inquiry under Mr Justice Sheen opens in London. David Steel QC, Council for the Secretary of State in opening remarks is quoted as saying that the court will probably conclude that the only tenable explanation for the accident is that large quantities of water flowed onto the car decks through the wide-open bow doors. He also praises the efficient rescue operation.

Tuesday 28 April

Counsel for TT at the Inquiry opens statement for the ferry operators by saying that the company accepts responsibility for the accident.

4-6 May

Four more bodies washed up on Belgian coast, bringing total to 186. Total by 1 June reached 188, with at least 5 still missing.

Tuesday 5 May

Dover District Council Disaster Fund spokesman announces that fund stands at £3,930,000 of which £981,000 has already been paid to claimants.

Sunday 10 May

Sea trial of sister ship off Zeebrugge Harbour, ordered by the British Inquiry.

Monday 11 May

Herald towed to Vlissingen (Flushing), Zeeland, Netherlands.



MT
CEPC
DTSS

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Mr. de Meulemesster,

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

De Heer De Meulemesster

OA



MT
CC DHSS
PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Mr. Van Caillie,

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Eerwaarde Zuster Van Caillie

DA



MT
cc PC
DHSS

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Mr. Verlinde,

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

De Heer A Verlinde

DA



MT
CCPC
DHS

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Mr. Jans

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

De Heer G Jans

DA



file

MT
CEDHSS
PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Mr. Herman.

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

De Heer Herman

DA



MJ
ce DHS
PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1987

Dear Dr. Van Oyen

I am writing to express my profound gratitude to you and your staff for the help which you gave to the victims of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to see for myself the quality of the care and the compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the outstanding performance of the hospital and ambulance services on that tragic occasion. It comes with the gratitude and respect of all our people.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

De Heer Van Oyen

OA

PRIME MINISTER

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER

Lady Trumpington is to visit hospitals in the Zeebrugge area next week and will present a plaque to each one of them commemorating their sterling performance during the Zeebrugge ferry disaster. She has expressed the hope that you would agree to write to each of the hospital directors.

I attach letters to the six of them for your signature if you agree.

CDP

Signed [unclear]

Charles Powell

13 May 1987



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY
Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY
Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Charles Powell Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

Dear Charles,

As you know, on 22 May Baroness Trumpington will be visiting the six hospitals in Belgium where the survivors and relatives of the Zeebrugge ferry disaster were cared for.

Lady Trumpington will be presenting plaques to each hospital engraved with a message, the text of which is attached. She also felt that a personal letter from the Prime Minister to each of the Directors of the hospitals presented in a frame, would be a fitting additional memento of the gratitude of the British people.

Lady Trumpington would therefore be very grateful if the Prime Minister would consider the attached draft and kindly sign a letter to each of the six directors whose details are also enclosed.

We will, of course arrange for the framing of the letters here.

12 MAY 1987

Yours truly
G H Langsdon

G H LANGSDON
Private Secretary

Enc

TEXT OF MESSAGE FOR PLAQUE

MS7102p



(DHSS Crest)

MET WELGEMEENDE DANK VOOR DE HULP EN ZORGEN VERLEEND ANN
DE BRITSE SLACHTOFFERS VAN DE VEERBOOT RAMP
TE ZEEBRUGGE IN MAART 1987

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS FOR THE CARE GIVEN TO BRITISH VICTIMS
OF THE ZEEBRUGGE FERRY ACCIDENT IN MARCH 1987

Overhandigd door het
Britse Ministerie van
Gezondheidszorg en
Sociale Zekerheid

Presented by the
Department of Health
and Social Security
of the United Kingdom



THE DIRECTORS OF THE HOSPITALS WHERE VICTIMS WERE PLACED ARE:

1. De Heer Van Oyen
A Z St Jan ~~Van Hooyen~~
Ruddeeshove 10
7940 Brugge
2. De Heer Herman
Fabiolaziekenhuis
Dr Vebhaeghestraat 1
8370 Blankenberge
3. De Heer G Jans
St Lucasziekenhuis
St Lucaslaan 29
1700 Assebroek
4. De Heer De Meulemesster
O L V Ter ~~Linder~~ *Linden*
Graae Jansdijk 162
8300 Knokke-Heist
5. Eerwaarde Zuster Van Caillie
St Jozef Kliniek
Komvest 34
Bood Brugge
6. De Heer A Verlinde
Elisabeth Ziekenhuis
Gentsesteenweg 132
8300 Sysel -Damme

Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. I was able to feel for myself the quality of the care and compassion extended to them. I am glad to have this further opportunity to pay tribute to your efforts.

DRAFT

I am writing to you and your staff to express my profound gratitude for the help which you gave to the victims of the accident involving the Zeebrugge ferry.

outstanding response

Baroness Trumpington will be presenting you with a plaque to commemorate the skill and compassion the hospital and ambulance services showed on that tragic occasion. It comes in the gratitude and respect of all our people.

The survivors and relations of those who died pay tribute with me to your efforts. This is yet another example of the long and close friendship between our two countries.

GR
x 6 please. Names & addresses attached

GR



010.

ps
1/5

With the Compliments of

Sir Jeffrey Sterling, C.B.E.

Chairman

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Fax: 01-930 8572



1837 **150** 1987
YEARS

News and Information

The P&O Group

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION TO ALL PERSONNEL

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

1 May 1987

TOWNSEND THORESEN

"HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE"

On Monday of this week the judicial enquiry into the loss of the "Herald of Free Enterprise" opened in London. Many of you will be aware of the massive media coverage given to the subject. Before the enquiry concludes, millions of words will be printed and broadcast.

We view the terrible event at Zeebrugge with the deepest compassion.

It is vitally important that we consider the tragedy and its aftermath with reason and objectivity. From the outset we have had two overriding priorities. Firstly, the survivors and next of kin were helped quickly, as it was within our power, in every material way possible. Thus we established an immediate ex gratia welfare fund of £250,000 and subsequently were instrumental in raising the insurance limit from £38,000 to £80,000 while promising additional funds for cases of exceptional hardship. Secondly, rapid management decisions were implemented to ensure that safe shipboard procedures were in place and working and that operational supervision and control was fully effective.

Cont/...

N&I.76



1837 150 1987
YEARS

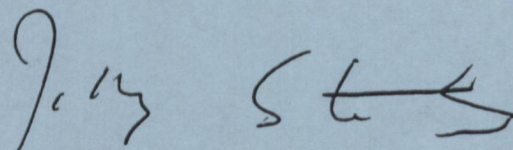
The current UK national advertising campaign to which I referred on 13 April states unequivocally that P&O is putting its name and reputation alongside its new subsidiary, Townsend Thoresen. The aim is to reassure those tens of thousands of Townsend Thoresen passengers already booked for the coming summer holidays that they will travel securely and safely.

Townsend Car Ferries Limited have stated, categorically, at the judicial enquiry that the accident was caused by avoidable human error and accept full responsibility. We have also stated that the "Herald of Free Enterprise" will never again sail as part of Townsend Thoresen or indeed in any other P&O fleet.

The weight of publicity associated with the enquiry is daunting. Although some of it is distorted, it is a process which serves a vital public interest and should be seen and supported in that light.

Every member of management ashore or officer at sea carries full responsibility for his or her decisions and actions. This principle cannot be compromised.

LET ME RE-EMPHASISE THAT SAFETY IN ALL OF OUR OPERATIONS, WORLDWIDE, IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE.


Jeffrey Sterling

FINE
DA
BC



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

27 April 1987

Dear Jon

SAFETY OF ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF FERRIES

Thank you for your letter of 23 April.
The Prime Minister has seen, and noted this.

I am sending a copy of this letter
to the Private Secretaries to other members
of the Cabinet and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet
Office).

Louis

Andrew

(P.A. BEARPARK)

J. Cunliffe, Esq.,
Department of Transport.

cc	HO	MAFF	DM
	LEO	DOE	PGO
	HMT	SO	CAZ
	FLO	WO	CO
	DES	DTI	OAL
	NIO	LPO	DTN
	MOD	CAT	
	DMH	UPSO	

df

010

P&O

[Faint handwritten scribbles]

[Handwritten initials]
24/4

With the Compliments of

Sir Jeffrey Sterling, C.B.E.
Chairman

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Fax: 01-930 8572



TOWNSEND THORESEN

R24/4

24th April, 1987

TOWNSEND CAR FERRIES LTD

Townsend Car Ferries Ltd. wish to advise that the following has taken place:-

1. Instructions have been issued to all vessels that a positive reporting procedure must be followed to confirm the closure of the bow and stern doors before proceeding to sea.
2. Bridge light indicators have been installed in all their vessels in order to show whether the main car deck doors are in the open or closed position.
3. Closed circuit video cameras are being installed in the main car deck to display the bow and stern doors on a screen located on the bridge as a further check.
4. A senior P&O executive has been appointed to review all existing systems and to carry out audits of shipboard practices to ensure that proper procedures are maintained.

Careful consideration will naturally be given to the recommendations of the Secretary of State for Transport's Formal Investigation into the HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE casualty when they are published in order to determine whether any further steps are necessary.

NO FURTHER COMMENT WILL BE MADE
PRIOR TO THE FORMAL INVESTIGATION.

ends.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

Andy Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

ms

23 April 1987

Dear Andy,

SAFETY OF ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF FERRIES

My Secretary of State spoke briefly with the Prime Minister after E(LF) Committee today about the difficulty we had encountered on the proposed announcement of interim safety measures for ro-ro ferries (my Secretary of State's minute to the Prime Minister of 21 April, copied to Cabinet colleagues, refers). As he explained, the Counsel for the Secretary of State at the Formal Investigation, Mr David Steel QC, advised this morning that the proposed announcement could create problems for Mr Justice Sheen, the Wreck Commissioner in charge of the Investigation. He was particularly concerned at the proposal to make the fitting of bridge warning lights a statutory requirement as it now transpires that this issue is likely to be a point of some contention at the Investigation.

My Secretary of State's view, which I believe the Prime Minister shares, is that, if possible, we should avoid creating any difficulties for the Investigation and he has therefore decided not to proceed with the planned announcement. An inspired Question had been tabled by Mr Peter Rees for answer today: this will now be answered by reference to the measures announced by my Secretary of State in his Statement to the House on 9 March, immediately following the disaster. The Answer will also make clear that if, as the Investigation proceeds, it becomes apparent that measures ought to be taken before the Investigation is completed, he will not hesitate to do so. Mr Steel is quite content with this formulation. A copy of the draft Answer is attached.

The other announcement mentioned in my Secretary of State's minute, relating to the proposed new compensation limits for passengers under the Athens Convention, is being made today as planned.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries
to other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours,

Jon

J CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr Peter Rees (Con - Dover):

119 To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he has any plans for further measures to improve the safety of roll-on/roll-off ferries; and if he will make a statement.

MR JOHN MOORE

As I informed the House on 9 March, my Department has embarked on a programme of checks on roll-on/roll-off ships, and these checks will be repeated at six-monthly intervals.

The Formal Investigation into the loss of the Herald of Free Enterprise opens on Monday. When it reports, I shall give most urgent and serious consideration to its recommendations. If, as the Investigation proceeds, it becomes clear that measures ought to be taken before the inquiry process has been completed, I shall not hesitate to do so.



File 416

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

23 April 1987

SAFETY OF ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF FERRIES

The Prime Minister has seen and noted your Secretary of State's minute of 21 April.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

P. A. BEARPARK

Jonathan Cunliffe, Esq.,
Department of Transport.

AB



cc BG
cc B1

Prime Minister 2

Prime Minister

SAFETY OF ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF FERRIES

The Formal Investigation into the capsizing of the Herald of Free Enterprise opens on Monday 27 April under the Chairmanship of Mr Justice Sheen. This will provide the opportunity for a full public examination of the causes of the disaster, and I have made clear that I will pay the closest attention to whatever recommendations the Investigation makes about the safety of roll-on/roll-off ferries. I hope that in this way public confidence in the safety of ferries can be reassured.

However, given the scale of the disaster, I thought it right to conduct an immediate review to consider whether there were any steps which ought to be taken immediately, to prevent a recurrence. As a result of this initial review I have decided to take certain measures straightaway. First, I propose to make the fitting of warning lights on the bridge, and of closed circuit TV monitors on the car deck a statutory requirement, to be applied to all ro-ro ferries using UK ports. Secondly, I propose to issue a Merchant Shipping Notice drawing attention to the statutory position on the closing of car deck doors, and warning owners of the risk of prosecution for failure to comply. Thirdly, I am instituting a programme of six-monthly inspections by my Department's surveyors of all ro-ro ferries using our ports. I plan to announce these measures in a Parliamentary Answer on Thursday.

These initial steps are not intended in any way to prejudge the outcome of the Formal Investigation, and it could well be that there are other points which may arise on which action may be required. These might include, for instance,



procedures for ensuring that car deck doors are closed before a vessel proceeds to sea, the rules on the securing of vehicles, and possibly the design requirements for this type of ferry. But these I think are matters which should await the outcome of the Investigation.

We also intend to announce on Thursday, the result of our consultation on raising the limit of compensation for loss of life or injury to passengers at sea. As you may be aware, the limit is at present £38,000 under the Athens Convention: we have not decided on the final figure which will be announced on Thursday, but we are thinking in the range £80,000-£100,000. The new limit will probably come into force at the end of May and will not apply retrospectively to accidents which have occurred before that date. P&O have, however, announced that they have agreed with the insurers to apply voluntarily the new limit to compensation claims arising from the loss of the Herald of Free Enterprise. P&O have also announced that they will provide compensation over and above the new limit where appropriate.

I am sending a copy of this minute to other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

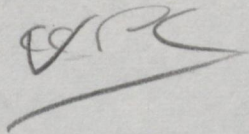
JOHN MOORE

21 April 1987

P&O

AG ^{2/17} 9/4

to see you



With the Compliments of

Sir Jeffrey Sterling, C.B.E.

Chairman

~~NW~~ to the

COO
P/4.

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Fax: 01-930 8572



1837 **150** 1987
YEARS

News Release

The P&O Group

8 April 1987

"HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE"

COMPENSATION LEVELS AGREED

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, parent company of Townsend Car Ferries Limited, announced today that it has reached agreement for the insurers of the "Herald of Free Enterprise" (The Standard P&I Club) to increase the limit of compensation for survivors and next of kin to the new increased limit to be designated by Her Majesty's Government. It is intended that claims are settled with all possible speed.

P&O has confirmed that it will maintain its previously announced provision of funds to provide compensation over and above the designated limits set by the Government.

Compensation payments for crew survivors and next of kin are not governed by convention limitations. These claims are currently being dealt with and settled with minimum delay.

- more -

P&O Group Information
79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Facsimile: 01-930 8572/3

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company Liability Limited by Royal Charter
Head Office: 79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ Registered Number Z73 England

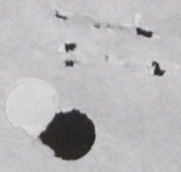


Mr Michael Napier, as Chairman of the steering committee of solicitors for the passenger claimants, has told the company, "We are very pleased with this outcome and the initiative taken by P&O as the parent company of Townsend Car Ferries Limited. Bearing in mind the short term need payments already made, it will provide proper levels of compensation and eliminate the distress caused by delay and we will immediately recommend acceptance of this offer.".

- ends -

Note for Editors:

1. The present Athens Convention limitation is set at £38,000 per claim for death or personal injury and was set some 12 years ago.
2. The Department of Transport is currently proposing an increase in this limit. Its consultative paper states, "An increase to £95,000 would roughly match the increase in UK monetary earnings since 1974; an increase to £80,000 would match closely the present limit for carriage by UK airlines.".



RESTRICTED



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

J. Tesse
2. CF/GR 15 p.c.

25 March 1987

P A Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

[Handwritten mark]

Dear Andy,

Prime Minister

The service at the h @ 11.00

on 15 April

ZEEBRUGGE MEMORIAL SERVICE

Thank you for your letter of 24 March about the Zeebrugge memorial service.

25/3

I understand that the Prime Minister had a further discussion this morning about this subject with the Lord President and my Secretary of State. Mr Moore reported on the briefing he had been given in Zeebrugge on 23 March about the timetable for the salvage operation on the "Herald of Free Enterprise", and explained that, though it should (assuming reasonable weather) be possible to recover most of the bodies in the second half of next week, it would take a further fortnight to pump out the vessel and recover all the remaining bodies. The likelihood was, therefore, that if the memorial service was held as planned on 15 April, a number of bodies would still remain to be recovered from the wreck. In discussion, however, it was noted that there were disadvantages in any postponement of the memorial service until May: further bodies might be washed ashore at any time and there was no date at which we could be certain all bodies had been recovered. The Archbishop of Canterbury was understood to favour the original date. Mr Moore was asked to establish that the Archbishop was fully briefed on the timetable for the salvage operation. If the Archbishop remained content that the memorial service should take place as planned on 15 April, then Ministers would also be content.

I have spoken accordingly to the Dean's office at Canterbury Cathedral, who have consulted the Archbishop. He is now fully aware of the timescale for the salvage operation, and is content for the memorial service to take place on 15 April as planned.

Sir William Heseltine, and Sir Jeffrey Sterling, to whom we have also explained the timescale for the salvage operation, are also content for the memorial service to take place on 15 April.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

**THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

TEMPORARILY
RETAINED

S. Gray
29/3/2016

the memorial service will now be at 11 am, and not 11.30 am as previously arranged. Canterbury Cathedral are arranging for announcements to be made in the press, probably on Friday 27 March.

I am copying this letter to Joan MacNaughton in the Lord President's office, and to Trevor Woolley in the Cabinet Office.

Yours

Richard

R A ALLAN
Private Secretary

RESTRICTED

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER AT ZEEBRUGGE: MARCH 1987

MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCE

12 March

H.E. Senor Javier Perez de Cuellar
Mr. Syed Sharif Ahmed
His Highness Shaikh Sa'ad Al Abdullah Al Sabah
H.E. Herr Erich Honecker
H.E. Senor Don Felipe Gonzalez Marquez
Monsieur Pierre Mauroy
Monsieur Jacques Chirac
H.E. Monsieur Francois Mitterrand
The Hon. P. W. Botha
The Hon. R. Hawke
Mr. Charles Haughey
H.E. Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland

13 March

His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal
Major General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida
H.E. Dr. Helmut Kohl
Mr. Charles Haughey

16 March

Dr. Salim Wakim
H.E. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda
H.E. Mr. Branko Mikulic
Mr. Yitzhak Shamir
H.E. The Hon. Dr. Quett Ketumile Jonny Masire
H.E. Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda
H.E. Mr. Lubomir Strougal
H.E. Dr. Franz Vranitzky
H.E. General Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq

Mrs. Elizabeth Dole
H.E. General Gnassingbe Eyadema
H.E. Mr. Turgut Ozal
H.E. Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo
H.E. General Prem Tinsulanonda
Council of Ministers of the USSR
The Rt. Hon. David Lange
H.E. Mr. Spyros Kyprianou

17 March

Monsieur Pierre Aubert
The Lord Mayor of Cork

20 March

H.E. Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone
H.E. Mr. Andreas Papandreou

23 March

The Rt. Hon. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara

PRIME MINISTER

file 16

ZEEBRUGGE MEMORIAL SERVICE

I understand from the Secretary of State for Transport's Office that the ferry may be righted next week, and it will then take two to three weeks to pump out all the water from the lower decks, and thus to retrieve all the bodies. The earliest this process can be complete is therefore somewhere in the period 16 to 23 April. Mr. Moore is concerned that it would be wrong to hold a Memorial Service at Canterbury Cathedral before all the bodies have been recovered, and would therefore strongly favour postponing it. The problem is when it should be postponed till. We could probably find a date early in May, but Mr. Moore fears that this might be viewed as electioneering, and has therefore suggested that we wait until July. I would have thought, however, that this might look rather odd being so long both after the disaster, and the recovery of the bodies.

Agree to postpone to May?

Or,

Postpone to July?

P. A. BEARPARK

23 March 1987

A Red

CC FCO



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. TS1/8710 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Your Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your Government and people on this sad occasion.

Yours sincerely
Rangwita Kalita

The Right Honourable Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara
G.C.M.G., K.B.E.

2

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T49B187



10 DOWNING STREET

LPO

DSG
file
afw

SUBJECT CC MASTER THE PRIME MINISTER

20 March 1987

OPS

Filed a DISASTERS Herald
of Free Ent &

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of
condolence following the Herald of Free
Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much
appreciated your expression of sympathy
and that of your Government and people.
I shall ensure that it is passed on to
the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Andreas Papandreou

LPO

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE



ble 59
cc to

SERIAL No. T49A/87 10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT cc MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the bereaved families at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely
Yasuhiro Nakasone

His Excellency Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone

LB

GRS 730

Restricted

RESTRICTED

FM BRUSSELS

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELNO 93

OF 201655Z MARCH 87

INFO SAVING PARIS, THE HAGUE, BONN, UKREP AND UKDEL NATO PRUSSELS

MY TELNOS 77 AND 89: ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER: CONSULAR ASPECTS

SUMMARY

1. AN UPDATED SUMMARY SITREP ON THE HANDLING OF CONSULAR ASPECTS OF THE AFTERMATH OF THE DISASTER.

DETAIL

2. THE CONSUL (PEATE) AND TWO LOCAL STAFF (MS E D DAVIS AND MRS P J ARN) MAINTAINED OUR CONSULAR PRESENCE IN ZEEBRUGGE UNTIL 14 MARCH. THE PRINCIPAL BURDEN OF PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, ACCOMMODATION AND REPATRIATION FOR THE SURVIVORS AS WELL AS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WHO HAD COME TO BELGIUM FELL ON TOWNSEND THORESEN. BUT WE WERE ABLE TO ASSIST BY VISITING AND ADVISING THOSE AFFECTED (AS IN PARA 8 OF MY TEL 77) AND BY RAISING THEIR PROBLEMS EITHER WITH THE COMPANY OR WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

3. AFTER SOME INITIAL CRITICISM OF A LACK OF INFORMATION, TOWNSEND THORESEN ARRANGED DAILY BRIEFINGS FOR THE REMAINING GROUP OF SURVIVORS AND RELATIVES. MOST OF THEIR EFFORT WAS DIRECTED TO THE IDENTIFICATION AND TRACING OF THOSE MISSING, TO THE TIMETABLE FOR THE SALVAGE OPERATION AND TO PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE MANY INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE ARISEN FROM THE DISASTER. THE CONSUL WAS ABLE TO ASSIST THE COMPANY IN THIS AS WERE THE KENT POLICE AND THE UNDERTAKERS (KENYONS). SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL COUNSELLING WAS READILY PROVIDED BY THE BRITISH CHURCHES IN BELGIUM AND ELSEWHERE, BY THE BELGIAN RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS, AS WELL AS BY VISITING SOCIAL WORKERS FROM DOVER AND KENT AND FROM THE DHSS IN FOLKSTONE AND DOVER (THROUGH WHOM ALL CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS ARISING FROM THE DISASTER WILL BE CHANNELLED). THE DHSS HAD ALSO SEPERATELY ASSURED THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES THAT ALL PATIENT COSTS FOR EMERGENCY AND HOSPITAL TREATMENT WOULD BE MET BY HMG DIRECT.

4. SINCE 14 MARCH, WE HAVE MAINTAINED CONTACT WITH TOWNSEND THORESEN FROM BRUSSELS. WE HAVE ALSO ASSISTED KENT POLICE WHO HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR DRAWING UP AN AUTHORITATIVE LIST IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OF CONFIRMED SURVIVORS AND OF THOSE REPORTED MISSING AND WHO WERE LIKELY TO HAVE TRAVELLED ON THE FERRY. THE LISTS, WHICH ARE NOW BEING COORDINATED BY DOVER POLICE, HAVE BEEN REVISED DAILY AS A RESULT OF ENQUIRIES CONDUCTED IN THE UK AND ELSEWHERE. IN THE ABSENCE OF A PASSENGER LIST, DOUBT ABOUT THE FINAL TOLL MAY REMAIN FOR SOME TIME, AT LEAST UNTIL ALL BODIES HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THE WRECK. ACCORDING TO THE BELGIANS, 53 BODIES HAD BEEN RECOVERED BY

-1-

Restricted

117

Restricted

17 MARCH. TOWNSEND THORESEN TOLD US ON 17 MARCH THAT THE WRECK COULD BE UPRIGHT BY 27 OR 30 MARCH BUT THERE HAVE SINCE BEEN DAYS OF BAD WEATHER.

5. TOWNSEND THORESEN WERE CONCERNED THAT RELATIVES MIGHT RETURN TO BELGIUM, WHEN MORE BODIES HAD BEEN RECOVERED. THE BEST PROFESSIONAL ADVICE IS THAT VISUAL IDENTIFICATION BY RELATIVES WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE. DURING HIS VISIT TO ZEEBRUGGE ON 18 MARCH, THE DOVER CORONER, MR RICHARD STURT, SAID THAT HE WOULD CONSULT THE BELGIAN LEGAL AUTHORITIES ABOUT THEIR REQUIREMENTS FOR IDENTIFICATION AND ABOUT HOW RELATIVES MIGHT BEST BE DISCOURAGED FROM RETURNING TO BELGIUM FOR THE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS. RELATIVES MAY OF COURSE STILL BE CONCERNED ABOUT RETURN HERE FOR THE RECOVERY OF ANY PERSONAL ITEMS OF PROPERTY, FOR WHICH THE BELGIAN POLICE HAVE ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS FURTHER WITH THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES DURING MR JOHN MOORE'S VISIT TO ZEEBRUGGE ON 23 MARCH.

6. A MAJOR CONCERN OF RELATIVES WAS WHETHER SOME FORM OF BRITISH DEATH REGISTRATION COULD BE ISSUED FOR THOSE WHO WERE MISSING. MR D N GABE-THOMAS (REGISTRAR GENERAL OF SHIPPING AND SEAMEN, CARDIFF), BEGAN HIS INITIAL ENQUIRIES IN ZEEBRUGGE ON 14 MARCH AND OUTLINED TO US THE EVIDENCE HE WOULD REQUIRE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF THOSE LOST AT SEA.

7. A MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL RELIGIOUS SERVICE WAS HELD IN ZEEBRUGGE ON 9 MARCH (MY TEL 81). THE CONSUL ATTENDED A PRIVATE SERVICE FOR RELATIVES CONDUCTED AT SEA. I SHALL ATTEND THE PRINCIPLE ANGLICAN MEMORIAL SERVICE TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE SUFFRAGAN BISHOP OF EUROPE ON 21 MARCH IN OSTEND.

8. AS YOU KNOW THERE HAS BEEN INTENSE MEDIA INTEREST THROUGHOUT THE DISASTER AND RESCUE OPERATION. AT TIMES THIS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE DISTRESS TO SURVIVORS AND RELATIVES, PARTICULARLY AT THE HOSPITALS, THE MORTUARY AND AT THE SERVICE ON 9 MARCH. IN CONSULTATION WITH TOWNSEND THORESEN AND THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES, WHO WERE QUITE EFFECTIVE AT CONTROLLING THE WORST ONRUSHES OF THE MEDIA, WE ENDEAVOURED TO BALANCE THEIR NEED FOR ACCESS AND INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO THE VICTIMS. IN AN UNUSUAL LETTER OF THANKS THE FOREIGN EDITOR OF BBC TELEVISION NEWS REFERS TO THE "NEVER-ENDING

-2-

Restricted

/PATIENCE

Restricted

PATIENCE'' ''CO-OPERATION'' AND ''TREMENDOUS SERVICE IN VERY
DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES'' WHICH WE GAVE. ABSIT OMEN.

PETRIE

YYYY

BWLNAN 2657

LIMITED
WEO
MAED
CONS D
NEWS D
INFO D
PLANNING STAFF
DEFENCE D
PSD
PS
PS / LADY YOUNG
B / MR EGGAR
PS / PS
MR THOMAS
MR RATFORD
MR BRAITHWAITE
MR SLATER
CHIEF CLERK
MR BARRINGTON

COPIES TO:
SECRETARY OF STATE,
DEPT OF TRANSPORT.
PS / THE PRINCE OF WALES
BUCKINGHAM PALACE.
NO 10 DOWNING ST.

-3-

Restricted

CFC

OTO



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 March 1987

Dear Charles,

Herald of Free Enterprise

/ I attach a message of condolence to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of Fiji.

/ I also attach a draft reply.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

DSR (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Mr K K T Mara
Prime Minister of Fiji

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your Government and people on this sad occasion.

GH

Enclosures flag(s)

Prime Minister².



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

Andy Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

19 March 1987

Dear Andy

We spoke. I attach a copy of a Parliamentary Answer my Secretary of State has today given to Nigel Spearing on the recommendations made by the Court of Inquiry into the loss of the European Gateway ro-ro ferry in 1982. As I explained, there has been some criticism in the media that the Department had not responded to the lessons learnt from the loss of the European Gateway. As the PQ answer shows, this is not the case.

Yours Sincerely

Heather Wiphr

pp.

JON CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr Nigel Spearing (Lab - Newham South):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which recommendations made by the official inquiry into the capsized ferry 'European Gateway' in 1982 have since been acted upon.

MR JOHN MOORE

Recommendations of Courts of Formal Investigations are carefully considered and all relevant organisations within the industry are consulted before a decision is taken. The EUROPEAN GATEWAY/SPEEDLINK VANGUARD Inquiry made 15 recommendations, the most important six of which covered the provision and operation of watertight doors below the waterline, thus addressing a major factor in the loss of the European Gateway - the flooding below the waterline after she was holed in a collision. These recommendations have been implemented for all new ships and virtually implemented or are being discussed internationally for existing ships. The key recommendation which requires the fitting of power operated, watertight doors below the waterline has been implemented for all UK registered ro-ro ferries.

The full 15 recommendations and the action taken against each are listed below.

Recommendations

1. The Department should recognise that modern radar provides an alternative to compass bearings as a means of detecting the risk of collision and should emphasise this in M Notices.

2. Funds should be provided for research into the phenomenon of asymmetric flooding of a symmetrical compartment.

3. Consideration should be given to catering for the possibility of abandoning a ship listing to more than 15°.

4. Distribution and use of portable VHF sets should form part of the drill practised at musters.

Action Taken

The Department did not accept this premise but an M Notice was issued to draw attention to the proper use of radar as an aid to navigation and in the avoidance of collisions.

Stage 1 of the research project has been completed and stage 2 will commence shortly.

For a ship whose keel was laid on or after 1 July 1986 the Regulations now require that the lifeboats can be launched when the ship is

listed up to 20°.

A ship whose keel was laid on or after 1 July 1986 is required to have an emergency means of two-way communication (which may be fixed or portable or both) between emergency control station, muster and embarkation stations and strategic positions on board.

5. Passenger vessels should carry at least two portable loudhailers for communication with passengers in emergencies.

A ship whose keel was laid on or after 1 July 1986 requires either a public address system or some other means of communication.

6. There should be uniformity of practice in the stowage of lifejackets in ships of the same class.

In the final stages of discussions with the Industry.

7. Lifejackets for children and their stowage should be clearly marked "FOR CHILDREN"

It has been agreed with the Industry that new lifejackets presently marked for "persons weighing less than 32 kg" will also have the word "child" stencilled on them. Stowage will be so marked.

8. Distinguishing the stowage position of the safety knife in liferafts by luminous paint.

There is a difficulty in finding a suitable material which retains its luminosity for twelve months when stored in darkness. Meanwhile the position of the knife is being marked by reflective tape or some similar means, on a voluntary basis.

9. Regulations should require that, when practicable, passenger ships should operate with watertight doors closed.

After consultation with the Industry my Department has issued written guidance on the provision of access openings in watertight bulkheads of passenger ships and procedures for operating watertight doors. An M Notice on "The operation of watertight doors on passenger ships" has also been issued.

10. Power operation of watertight doors on passenger ships should be mandatory.

The relevant regulations have been amended so that power operation on new ships is a statutory requirement. In addition all existing UK registered passenger ro-ro ferries are now fitted with power operated doors.

11. Regulations should provide for uniformity in the operation of watertight doors.

The UK has taken this matter up with the International Maritime Organisation and it is expected to be agreed at the next session of the appropriate Subcommittee.

12. Regulations should require watertight doors in machinery spaces to be kept closed in reduced visibility.

13. Regulations should permit selected watertight doors in machinery spaces to be open in clear visibility.

14. Until regulations are changed British passenger ships should comply with Regulation 3 of the Merchant Shipping (Closings and Openings in Hulls and Watertight Bulkheads) Regulations 1980.

15. Consideration should be given for the Counsel to the Tribunal to be independent of the Department of Transport.

After extensive consultation it is expected that the next revision of the regulations dealing with the closing of openings in watertight bulkheads will include these requirements.

An M Notice has been issued to remind owners of passenger ships of the statutory requirements for the closing of openings in watertight bulkheads.

When there appears to be a conflict of interest it is the Department's view that this can be met by appointing separate representation for the Department's Marine Directorate.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 March 1987

Dear Charles

Herald of Free Enterprise

On 13 March you forwarded messages of condolence to the Prime Minister from:

The Prime Minister of Greece
The Prime Minister of Japan.

/ I enclose draft replies.

Yours ever

R N Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

M. Andreas Papandreou
Prime Minister of Greece

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

..... In Confidence

I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your Government and people. I ^{shall} ~~will~~ ensure that it is passed on the to families of the victims.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone
Prime Minister of Japan

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

SUBJECT:

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the bereaved families at this tragic time.

EA.

Enclosures flag(s)

News Release

The P&O Group

nbpm

19th March 1987

P&O PROVIDES ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR ZEEBRUGGE TRAGEDY

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, parent company of Townsend Car Ferries Limited, announced today that additional funds will be made available on an ex-gratia basis to meet specific needs of those who suffered loss as a result of the Zeebrugge tragedy. These funds will be additional to the £250,000 which P&O set aside following the disaster to meet immediate hardship needs.

P&O has taken this decision because an international convention of which Britain is a signatory, the Athens Convention, limits the amount of compensation available to claimants.

Commenting, Sir Jeffrey Sterling, Chairman of the P&O Group said, "These additional funds are intended to alleviate personal distress and hardship in cases where insurance cover may prove to be inadequate."

The claims centre established by Townsend Car Ferries Limited at its Dover office has so far dealt with initial claims from 150 survivors and dependants, totalling £225,000.

- ends -

P&O Group Information
79, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Fax: 01-930 8572/3

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company Liability Limited by Royal Charter
Registered Office: 79, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ Registered Number Z73 England



(7)



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 March 1987

Don Andy / *PS* 18/3

-dated 8/3/87

/ I enclose a letter of condolence from King Hussein of Jordan to the Prime Minister concerning the ferry disaster at Zeebrugge. We have already forwarded the Prime Minister's reply to Amman for onward transmission.

Done now

R N Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

Andy Bearpark Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

ee F Co



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 March, 1987.

Dear Mr President,

Thank you so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Royal Highness

Monsieur Pierre Aubert

ls



JA
Jill

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

17.3.87

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated the City Council's expression of sympathy on this sad occasion.

The Lord Mayor of Cork.

h

297711 PRDRME G

2129 UKREP FJ

Z

SIAN 1660

UNCLASSIFIED

PP FCOLN

FM SUVAA TO FCOLN
172040Z MAR

GRS 100

UNCLASSIFIED

FM SUVA

TO ROUTIEEEE PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 116

OF 172040Z MARCH 9EE87

FIJI: MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY ABOUT FERRY DISASTER

1. WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO FORWARD THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO THE
PRIME MINISTER FROM THE FIJI PREEE PRIME MINISTER.

BEGINS...

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

WE IN FIJI HAVE LEARNT WITH DEEP SORROW ABOUT THE
TRAGIC LOSS OF SO MANY LIVES AS A RESULT OF THE
FERRY TRAGEDY NEAR ZEEBRUGGE HARBOUR.

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF FIJI AND
PERSONALLY I WISH TO CONVEY TO YOUR EXCELLENCY'S
GOVERNMENT, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IN
PARTICULAR THE BEREAVED FAMILIES OUR HEARTFELT SYMPATHY
AT THEIR SAD LOSS.

YOURS SINCERELY

K K T MARA

.... ENDS.

PULLEN

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T46Q/8t

2045/17

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

PRIME MINISTER

THE ZEEBRUGGE DISASTER

Sir Jeffrey Sterling telephoned me today to say that there were still many relatives waiting in Zeebrugge in the hope that they would be able to identify the bodies of their families once the Herald of Free Enterprise had been salvaged. He feared that more relatives would descend upon the town as the salvage operation neared completion. There would then be unseemly and distressing scenes.

Sir Jeffrey understood that the Governor of the local Province had the power to decree that no relation should be able to get involved in the identification of bodies, which should be left to specialists. He further understood that the Governor was considering exercising this power of decree. He asked me whether HMG might encourage the Governor to exercise the power, for example, by saying that they would strongly endorse his action if he did.

I reported all this to Mr Moore's Private Secretary. Mr Moore is, rightly in my view, very cautious indeed in HMG expressing any view on possible action by the Governor in these circumstances. It is a matter for the Governor to decide whether he should exercise the power and he should be given neither encouragement nor discouragement to do so. This is a matter of which HMG should not become involved.

Subject to any comments that you might have, I will convey this to Sir Jeffrey tomorrow morning.

N.L.W.

Yes

N.L. Wicks

17 March 1987

MJ2AUS

Spoke accordingly to J. Sa
19/3
NW
19/3



SKW

atco

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Dr. Wakim,

Thank you for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Dr. Salim Wakim

SKW



CDP
2/3

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. 48/87

HIGH COMMISSION OF
THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

10 COLLINGHAM ROAD, LONDON, SW5 0NR. TEL. 01 373 8581/2/3/4

SUBJE CT ce. OPS
MASTER.

NOTE NO. 18/87

The High Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho presents its compliments to the Protocol Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to request the latter to transmit the following message from H.E. The Chairman of the Military Council and Council of Ministers, Major-General J.M. Lekhanya, to the Rt. Hon. the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher:-

QUOTE

COMPLIMENTS.

THE SAD NEWS OF THE MOST TRAGIC MARITIME DISASTER IN PEACETIME, IN WHICH MANY HUMAN LIVES WERE LOST WHEN THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE CAPSIZED IN THE BELGIAN HARBOUR OF ZEEBRUGGE, WAS RECEIVED WITH A DEEP SENSE OF ABIDING SHOCK.

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO, AND ON MY OWN PERSONAL BEHALF, I AM HEREBY SENDING YOUR EXCELLENCY, AND THROUGH YOU, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN IN GENERAL AND THE BEREAVED FAMILIES IN PARTICULAR, A MESSAGE OF SINCEREST SYMPATHIES AND HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES.

PLEASE BE ASSURED, YOUR EXCELLENCY, OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

UNQUOTE

The High Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Protocol Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the assurances of its highest consideration.

LONDON

16th March, 1987.





86W
ceto

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Gentlemen,

Thank you for your kind letter of
condolence following the Herald of Free
Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I
appreciated your expression of sympathy
for those involved in this tragic event.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R.

86W

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE



SERIAL No. T46P187

10 DOWNING STREET

GLL

cefes

SUBJECT CC MASTGR
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Mr. President.

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency General Gnassingbe Eyadema

SRW

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T460/87



JA

ctw

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Raymond Chanter

His Excellency Mr. Turgut Ozal.

SRW

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T46N/87

10 DOWNING STREET



cc:ro

JA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you very much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the bereaved families.

I found our meeting very useful and I hope you enjoyed your visit.

Yours sincerely
Rajmurti Shalita

His Excellency General Prem Tinsulanonda.

8th

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE



cefo
SLW

SERIAL No. T46M/87 10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely
David Lange

The Right Honourable David Lange

SLW

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46L/87



81W
cefc

10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your people on this sad occasion.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Spyros Kyprianou

81W

JD

Ceko



**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE**

SERIAL No. T46K/87

**10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA**

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

**SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS**

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciate your expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion.

*Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher*

His Excellency General Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq

SLW



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T46J187

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Charullo,

Thank you so much for your message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your kind thought on this tragic occasion is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Dr. Franz Vranitzky

16.3.87

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

ETATPRIORITE
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.,
IHRER BRITISCHEN MAJESTAET PREMIERMINISTER
10, DOWNING STREET
LONDON/S.W.1.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46I/87

DIE NACHRICHT VON DEM FURCHTBAREN SCHIFFSUNGLUECK, DAS
SICH VOR ZEEBRUGGE EREIGNETE UND BEI DEM SO VIELE MENSCHEN
DEN TOD GEFUNDEN HABEN, IST MIR UND ALLEN OESTERREICHERN
SEHR NAHE GEGANGEN. ICH BITTE SIE, NAMENS DER
OESTERREICHISCHEN

SUBJECT cc MASTER
OPS

COL 10:

FIH190 THE PAGE 2/29/22

BUNDESREGIERUNG SOWIE IN EIGENEN NAMEN,
DEN AUSDRUCK UNSERER TIEFEMPFUNDENE ANTEILNAHME AN DIESEN
SCHRECKLICHEN EREIGNIS ENTGEGENZUNEHMEN.

DR. FRANZ VRANITZKY
BUNDESKANZLER DER REPUBLIK OESTERREICH

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

PRIORITY

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher MP,
Her Britannic Majesty's Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street
London SW1

The news of the awful tragedy which occurred off Zeebrugge and which claimed the lives of so many people has upset me and all Austrians very deeply. Please accept, on behalf of the Austrian Federal Government and myself, the expression of our deep-felt sympathy at this terrible event.

Dr Franz Vranitzky
Federal Chancellor of the Austrian Republic

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46H187



cefw

JD

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

I was most grateful to receive your message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be much appreciated by the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Lubomir Strougal

8/12

ETAT

RT. HON. MRS. MARGARET THATCHER,

PRIME MINISTER OF BRITAIN,

LONDON.

16.3.87

IT WAS WITH DEEP GRIEF THAT I HAVE LEARNED OF THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF SOME BRISH CITIZENS IN A FERRY ACCIDENT LAST FRIDAY STP THE GOVERNMENT AND OEPL E OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI TOGETHER WITH ME SOLENNLY JOIN YOU

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. TL469/87

COL ETAT

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

PG204 RT. HON. P2/50

HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER, GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM IN THIS DARK HOUR OF MOURNING FOR THE LOST SOULS STOP PLEASE ACCEPT HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AND SYMPATHIES STOP MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD REST THEIR SOULS IN PEACE AND MORE ESPCIALLY GRANT PEACE OF MIND TO

COL CKD

PG204 HON. P3/13

THE BEREAVED FAMILIES STOP
H. KANUZUZ BANDA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI.

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

16.3.87

ETAT

HER EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARGARET THATCHER FRS MP
PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
LONDON

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46f/87

YOUR EXCELLENCY

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC AS WELL AS IN MY OWN NAME I SHOULD LIKE TO
OFFER YOU MY HEARTFELT

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

COL ETAT

ZHP935 ETAT HER PAGE2/31

SYMPATHIES WITH REGARD TO THE TRAGIC SEA DISASTER THAT TOOK
NUMEROUS HUMAN LIVES. PLEASE CONVEY MY CONDOLENCES ALSO TO THE
BEREAVED FAMILIES.

LUBOMIR STROUGAL

PRIME MINISTER

OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIALIST

REPUBLIC

COL NIL

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Teleg

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

JD

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE**



CCFco

SERIAL No. T466/87 10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

*SUBJECT cc MASTER
OPS*

*Filed on DISASTERS: Herald
of free Ent. Mar 87*

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a support to the families of the victims in their grief.

*Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher*

His Excellency Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda, GCB.

S/CM

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46D/87



JD
Cetco

10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I shall ensure that your kind sentiments are passed on to the injured and the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency The Hon. Dr. Quett Ketumile
Jonny Masire, JP, MP.

8/2/87

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46C/87



10 DOWNING STREET

JD
cefo

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you very much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the families of the victims in their grief.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Mr. Yitzhak Shamir

SHW

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T46B/87



citco

SPW

10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your expression of sympathy for those affected by this tragedy was very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Branko Mikulic

SPW



821
aF10

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Kenneth,

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this tragic time.

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T46A/87

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Lawson

Raymond

His Excellency Dr. Kenneth Kaunda

821



JA
c/fco

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

We are looking forward to your visit.

Yours sincerely
Nagant Shah

His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo.

86



GCL

cefero

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 March 1987

Dear Mrs. Dole,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It was indeed a terrible tragedy. Your kind thoughts were much appreciated.

Warm regards
Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Mrs. Elizabeth Dole

SLW



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

16 MAR 1987

Prime Minister ²

Andy Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Andy,

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER : CASUALTY FIGURES

The Prime Minister will have seen reports on the statement which M. de Croo, the Belgian Minister of Communications made to the Belgian Parliament on Friday last, 13 March, which suggested that the death toll from the Zeebrugge disaster could be of the order of 200 compared with the estimate of 135 dead or missing which my Secretary of State quoted in his statement in the House on 9 March.

My Secretary of State spoke to M. de Croo over the weekend, and officials here have been in touch with Townsend Thoresen, the Maritime Commissioner in Zeebrugge (who apparently supplied the figures which M. de Croo quoted) and the Kent Police. It appears that there are two main reasons for the discrepancies in the figures. First, there are differences about the actual number of survivors rescued. The Zeebrugge authorities think that there may have been some double counting in the confusion which was unavoidable in the aftermath of the disaster, for instance when survivors went from one hospital to another to try to trace their friends or relatives. (The Kent Police figures however appear consistent with those which we originally quoted.) Secondly, there have been difficulties in establishing the precise number of passengers on board. Townsend Thoresen are sticking firmly to their figure of 543, which is based on the crew list plus a physical count of passengers going on board, plus an estimate of the number of passengers on day trips from Dover who stayed aboard the vessel when it arrived in Zeebrugge. There are suggestions however that this figure may be an understatement because of the possibility of clandestine passengers, and because of the need to estimate passengers who had stayed on board. So it is clearly possible that the correct figure might be higher.

This uncertainty over the figures is clearly very unfortunate, and distressing to the next-of-kind of those not accounted for. But my Secretary of State's view is that we should avoid commenting further on the figures until the position is clearer. The Company are seeking to salvage the vessel in order to recover bodies on board as rapidly as possible, and when the number is known the position will become a lot clearer. Even so however it may not be possible to quote a totally accurate figure because some passengers may have jumped or fallen in the water and not been rescued.

/ I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries of other members of the Cabinet, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours,

Jon.

JON CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary



condemner

MR. POWELL

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER

The Duty Clerk has had a telephone call from the Department of Transport to say that unfortunately the death toll of the ferry disaster may in fact be higher than expected.

Mr. Krug (a Belgian Minister) made a statement yesterday, using figures which implied that the death toll might be over 200. This is higher than any figures previously given. This new figure comes from the Zeebrugge centre. The number of survivors had been over-estimated due to double-counting on the night of the disaster (ie. when people were taken to one hospital and then transferred to another). They also think that there were more people on board the ferry than had been previously estimated. The number of survivors is 349, not 409. The number of dead so far is 57, which leaves 164 missing.

The Department of Transport are getting in touch with the Belgians to see why they had not been contacted about this before. P&O representatives are not available at present as they are at a Memorial Service in Kent. Officials will be trying throughout the day to verify these figures and working on a possible statement for the press this afternoon.

SALLY

14 March 1987

upset

~~part~~ one plan

possibly close to

NTS live in bunch

world are

PRIME MINISTER'S

SUBJECT

PERSONAL MESSAGE

CC MASTER

SERIAL No. T46/v7

ops

RESTRICTED

41366 - 1

OCMIAN 1366
RESTRICTED
DD 131700Z BONNN
FM FCOLN TO BONNN
131500Z MAR
GRS 180

RESTRICTED
FM FCO
TO DESKBY 131700Z BONN
TELNO 165
OF 131500Z MARCH 87
INFO PRIORITY PARIS, BRUSSELS, THE HAGUE

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER : MESSAGE TO CHANCELLOR KOHL

1. PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER TO
CHANCELLOR KOHL. ORIGINAL FOLLOWS BY BAG.

QUOTE. DEAR HELMUT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF
CONDOLENCE FOLLOWING THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE DISASTER AT
ZEEBRUGGE. I MUCH APPRECIATED YOUR KIND THOUGHT AT THIS SAD
TIME. I SHALL PASS ON YOUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF THE
VICTIMS.

MAY I ALSO SAY HOW VERY GRATEFUL I AM FOR THE PART PLAYED IN THE
RESCUE OPERATIONS BY THE GERMANY NAVY. THEY UNDOUBTEDLY
CONTRIBUTED TO SAVING MANY LIVES AND TO PREVENTING WORSE
DISASTERS. IT WAS MOST HEARTENING TO WITNESS THIS EXAMPLE OF
CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS. I
SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD PASS ON MY THANKS TO ALL THOSE
CONCERNED. YOURS SINCERELY MARGARET THATCHER UNQUOTE.

HOWE

OCMIAN 1366
LIMITED

MAED

WED

NEWS DEPT

PRIVATE SECRETARY

PS/LADY YOUNG

PS/MRS CHALKER

PS/MR EGGAR

PS/PUS

MR THOMAS

MR BRAITHWAITE

MR RATFORD

MR SLATER

RESTRICTED



Je LPO
CPO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43P 187

Yours faithfully

Thank you very much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I visited the scene shortly afterwards, and saw for myself the scale of the tragedy and the suffering of those who had lost loved ones. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your people. It will come as a support to the families of the victims in their grief.

Yours sincerely

Rajam Shahar

His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal.

V



Je PA
cfo

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 March 1987

SUBJECT *cc* MASTER
OPS

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T430187**

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Major General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida CFR.

u



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43N/87

Dear Helmut,

Thank you very much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your kind thought at this sad time. I shall pass on your condolences to the families of the victims.

May I also say how very grateful I am for the part played in the rescue operations by the German Navy. They undoubtedly contributed to saving many lives and to preventing worse disasters. It was most heartening to witness this example of close cooperation between European friends and neighbours. I should be grateful if you would pass on my thanks to all those concerned.

Yours sincerely

Rajiv Gandhi

His Excellency Dr. Helmut Kohl.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 March 1987

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister
from:-

The Prime Minister of Greece
The Prime Minister of Japan

I should be grateful for draft replies
in due course.

(Charles Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 March 1987

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister
from:-

The Prime Minister of Greece
The Prime Minister of Japan

I should be grateful for draft replies
in due course.

(Charles Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

Andy Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

13 March '87.

Dear Andy.

J. G. R.
To note.

1. CF
for file

203
16/3

CHANNEL FERRY DISASTER FUND

I promised to keep you in touch with any extension of the arrangements for making payments to the fund. The fund have now set up a Freepost facility for donations by cheque and a Freephone facility for credit card donations. The attached note gives the details.

Yours,

Jon.

JON CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary

TO: Mr. Christie Smith,
Department of Transport
Fax No. 01 212 7955

CHANNEL FERRY DISASTER FUND

(SPONSORED BY DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL)

DONATIONS

All donations will be gratefully received.

Please use one of the following methods of payment:-

1. Send cheques to FREEPOST, DOVER, KENT, CT16 1BR
2. BANK GIRO CREDIT through any of the Clearing Banks to Account No. 71780661 at NATWEST BANK.
25 Market Square, Dover (Sorting Code 600704)
3. POST OFFICE GIRO CREDIT to Account No FREEPAY 9660
4. Access or Barclaycard payments may be made by telephoning FREEFONE FERRY FUND via Operator 100

CLAIMS AND ENQUIRIES

Claims are invited from those suffering bereavement, injury or loss from the tragedy. Please write to the Fund at FREEPOST, PO BOX 1000, DOVER, KENT CT16 1AB or telephone FREEFONE 1004

Those who have already responded to the Townsend Thoresen advertisement in the National Press on 10th March 1987 will be contacted direct and need not re-apply.

Receipt of payments from the Fund will not affect your right to compensation from other sources.

From: Chief Executive
Dover District Council



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1987

Dear Charles

*CR
10/11/87
a*

"Herald of Free Enterprise"

On 10 March you forwarded messages of condolence to the Prime Minister from:

Branko Mikulic

Kenneth Kaunda

Dr Salim Wakim

Spyros Kyprianou

Council of Ministers of the USSR, Moscow

Bryce Harland - conveying a message from David Lange.

/ I enclose draft replies.

Yours ever

Robert (R N) Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Mr Branko Mikulic

Secret

President of the Federal Executive Council of the

Confidential

Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Restricted

Unclassified

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise

CAVEAT

disaster at Zeebrugge. ~~I appreciated~~ your expression
of sympathy for those affected by this tragedy

was very much appreciated

EN

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

President Kaunda of Zambia

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge.

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts
of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this tragic
time.

Gh

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Dr Salim Wakim

Secret

(former candidate for Lebanon Presidency)

Confidential

POB 699 1211

Restricted

GENEVA 3

Unclassified

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Spyros Kyprianou

President of the Republic of Cyprus

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your people on this sad occasion.

EM

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Council of Ministers of the USSR
MOSCOW

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your kind letter of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I appreciated your expression of sympathy for those involved in this tragic event.

CH.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Mr David Lange
Prime Minister of New Zealand

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

It is ^{most} ~~not~~ comforting to know that the thoughts
of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this sad time.

GM.

Enclosures flag(s)



BM

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

10 March 1987

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister
from:

all in {
Branko Mikulic
Kenneth Kaunda
Dr. Salim Wakim
Spyros Kyprianou
Council of Ministers of the USSR, Moscow
Bryce Harland

I should be grateful for draft replies
in due course.

(C.D. Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

BM



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1987

Dear Charles

GM
To island

AM 13/3

On 12 March you forwarded messages of condolence from General Eyadema and Mrs Elizabeth Dole.

/ I attach draft replies.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:
Mrs Elizabeth Dole

Copies to:

US Secretary of Transportation

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It was indeed a terrible tragedy. Your kind thoughts were much appreciated.

EM

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

General Gnassingbe Eyadema
President of Togo

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

SUBJECT:

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your
expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion, and
shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of
the victims.

Handwritten initials

Enclosures flag(s)

cc/c

do



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1987

Dear Charles

GR
to [unclear]
on

"Herald of Free Enterprise"

/ I attach messages of condolence to the Prime Minister which have been conveyed by the respective Ambassadors on behalf of:

Mohammed Khan Junejo
Mr Turgut Ozal
General Prem Tinsulanonda.

/ I also attach draft replies.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Mohammed Khan Junejo
Prime Minister
Pakistan

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

CA

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM: Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

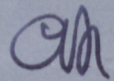
TO:

Copies to:

Turgut Ozal
Prime Minister
Turkey

SUBJECT:

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the families of the victims.



PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

General Prem Tinsulanonda
Prime Minister
Thailand

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

..... In Confidence

Thank you very much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the bereaved families.

eh

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1987

Dear Charles,

GR
To [unclear]
[unclear] ✓

no letter
Herald of Free Enterprise

On 11 March you forwarded messages of sympathy to the Prime Minister from:

Mr Yitzhak Shamir
Dr Q K J Masire
Dr H K Banda
Mr Lubomir Strougal
Dr Franz Uranitzky
M. Pierre Aubert
Mr Rauf Denktas

The Embassy of Pakistan conveyed a message of condolence from General Zia ul-Haq to the Prime Minister.

/ I attach draft replies to all messages except that from Mr Denktas. As Mr Denktas has written as "President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", which we do not recognise, we should not acknowledge his message.

Yours ever

R N Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of Israel

SUBJECT:

Thank you very much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a comfort to the families of the victims in their grief.

CRQ.

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Dr Q K J Masire
President of the Republic of Botswana

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I shall ensure that your ^{kind} sentiments are passed on to the injured and the families of the victims.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

H Kamuzuz Banda
President of the Republic of Malawi

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a support to the families of the victims in their grief.

CR.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Lubomir Strougal
Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak
Socialist Republic

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

I was most grateful to receive your message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be much appreciated by the families of the victims.

em

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Dr Franz Uranitzky
Federal Chancellor of the Austrian Republic

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your kind thoughts on this tragic occasion. *is much appreciated.*

CMR

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

M. Pierre Aubert
President of the Swiss Confederation

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

GD

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

General Zia-ul-Haq
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciate your expression of sympathy on this tragic occasion.

GM

Enclosures flag(s)

B

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

the number
dialling instructions

09 MAR 1987/1933

ZCZC DLM4516 ISA052

BXX CO TRAX 072

LEFKOSA 72/69 9 1710

THE RT.HON. MARGARET THATCHER M.P
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1

R10/3

ON T BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF
NORTHERN CYPRUS AND IN MY OWN NAME I WOULD LIKE TO EXEND OUR DEEP
SYM PATHY AND CONDOLENCES TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AND IN YOUR
EXCELLENCY'S DISTINGUISHED PERSON TO

COL 10 RD TEXT OR NORTHERN CYUPRUS AND IN MY OWN NAME I WOULD LIKE TO
IRPT TO EXTEND OUR DEEP SYM

PAGE/2

THE RELATIVES OF THE
VICCTIMS OF THE CHANNEL TRAGEDY
RAUF R.DENKAS
PRESIDENT OF THE
TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling inst



fa D
afro
PC

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Dear Secretary-General.

I was most grateful for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It was indeed a terrible tragedy. Your kind thought was much appreciated.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Senor Javier Perez de Cuellar

✓16

Bardas Chorcai Cork Corporation



CITY HALL
CORK
Tel.021-966222/966017

Ref JO'D.IM

Mrs. M. Thatcher,
Prime Minister,
United Kingdom,
No. 10 Downing Street,
London,
England.

12th March 1987

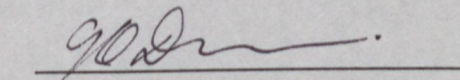
R16

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

I am asked by the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor G. O'Sullivan and the City Council to inform you that at a meeting of the City Council held on the 9th March 1987 it was agreed unanimously that the sympathy of Council be extended to the bereaved families of the victims of the "Herald of Free Enterprise" ferry tragedy off Zeebrugge. I would be obliged if you would accept the sympathy of the City Council on behalf of the bereaved families.

It was agreed also that congratulations be extended to the Rescue Services involved on their success in rescuing so many of the passengers in very difficult conditions.

Yours faithfully,



J. O'DONOVAN,
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER,
TOWN CLERK'S DEPT.



fa 50
afw
POT

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Monsieur Pierre Mauroy

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Monsieur Pierre Mauroy

Sto



10 DOWNING STREET

file
after
S. P. C.

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Jean Pierre Minister

It was most kind of you to send a message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

This tragedy has affected not only the people of Britain but the whole of Europe. The rescue operation was a splendid example of European co-operation. I am very grateful for the way in which the French authorities responded at the time.

Thank you for your expression of sympathy.

*Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher*

Monsieur Jacques Chirac

2/16

FCO 13/87

London, 12 March 1987

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43M/87

Dear Prime Minister,

I have been asked to forward to you the following message from Prime Minister Nakasone :

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

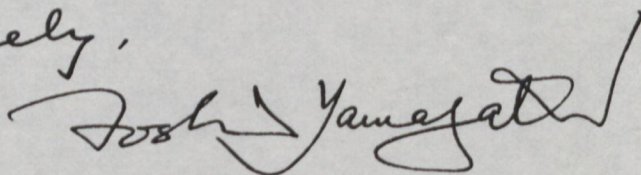
"I have learned with deep sorrow of the accident of the 'Herald of Free Enterprise', off the Belgian coast.

On behalf of the Japanese people, I wish to express my sincere sympathy to the people of your country, especially to those who have suffered from the loss of their families."

Yasuhiro Nakasone
Prime Minister of Japan

May I send my own condolences to those who have suffered bereavement in this tragic accident.

Yours sincerely,



Toshio Yamazaki
Ambassador

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury,
10, Downing Street,
London,
S.W.1.



10 DOWNING STREET

file
cc fro
PC

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Filed on DISASTERS: Herald of Free
Enterprise Mar 87

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43L 187

Sean Taoiseach

I write to express my gratitude for the Irish Government's kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely

Rajiv Gandhi

Mr. Charles Haughey, T.D.

RB



file
a fo
PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43K/87

Your Prime Minister,

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I very much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Her Excellency Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland.

WFO

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43J/87



filed
cc to
PC

10 DOWNING STREET

*SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS*

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Dear Bob,

Thank you so much for your kind message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely
Royce

The Honourable R. Hawke, AC, MP.

Rho

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T431/87



10 DOWNING STREET

file D
at 10
PC

SUBJECT RE MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Filed on DISASTERS: Herald of
Free Enterprise Mar 87.

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciate your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

The Hon. P.W. Botha, DMS.

Lb

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43H/87



file JD
cfw
R

10 DOWNING STREET

~~MINISTERIAL~~ SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Dear Mr. President.

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

Yours sincerely
Rajiv Gandhi

His Excellency Monsieur Francois Mitterrand, GCB.

AB

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T439/87



10 DOWNING STREET

L-B JD
also
PA

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It was thoughtful of you to write, and I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion.

Yours sincerely
Felipe Gonzalez Marquez

His Excellency Senor Don Felipe Gonzalez Marquez

ABO



file 5D
cc to
RA

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

Dear Mr. Honecker,

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. Your condolences will be a support to the families of the victims in their grief.

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43F/87**

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Herr Erich Honecker

KB

12. 3. 87

MAR 1987/1550

ZCZC DLM1952 RDD880

GBXX BY DDBL 078

(10)BERLIN TLX 78/61 7 1621

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T436/87

ETATPRIORITE

PREMIERMINISTERIN

DES VEREINIGTEN KOENIGREICHES

VON GROSZBRITANNIEN UND NORDIRLAND

IHRE EXCELLENZ

FRAU MARGARET THATCHER

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

ZU DEM SCHWEREN UNGLUECK, DAS DAS BRITISCHE FAEHRSCHIFF IM
HERMELKANAL TRAF UND ZAHLREICHE MENSCHENLEBEN FORDERTE,
UEBERMITTE ICH IHNEN SOWIE DEN ANGEOEERIGEN DER OPFER MEIN
AUFRICHTIGES BEILEID

ERICH HONECKER

GENERALSEKRETRER DES ZENTRAKKOMITEES DER SOZIALISTISCHEN
EINHEITSPARTEI DEUTSCHLANDS UND VORSITZENDER DES STAATSRATES
DER DEUTSCHEN DEMOKRATISCHEN REPUBLIK

COL NIL

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the
number shown in your dialling instructions

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

ZCZC DLM1678 ZGX2329 MTA997 MDA360 PGA037 IT003

GBXX BU ESMD 065

MADRID PALACIO DE LA MONCLOA 64/62 07 1225

12.3.87

QLMA0087

~~URGENT~~

S.E. MARGARET THATCHER

PRIMER MINISTRO DEL REINO UNIDO

DE GRAN BRETANA E IRLANDA DEL NORTE

LONDON SW1

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43D/87

AL CONOCER TRAGICA NOTICIA DEL NAUFRAGIO DEL TRANSBORDADOR BRITANICO
HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE EN EL PUERTO BELGA DE ZEEBRUGGE DESEO
HACERLE LLEGAR MIS SENTIEMENTOS DE HONDO PESAR QUE LE RUEGO TRASLADE
A LOS FAMILIARES DE LAS VICTIMAS.

FELIPE GONZALEZ MARQUEZ

PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO ESPANOL

COL URGENT

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

010

01-936-6782

Communications on this subject should
be addressed to

THE LEGAL SECRETARY
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS,
LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT,
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,
LONDON, W.C.2. msj
13/3

12 March 1987

A Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON S W 1

0/5

Dear Andy

THE "HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE" DISASTER

WITH PAB?

Following Charles Powell's letter of 9 March to Richard Allen we asked the Treasury Solicitor to report on progress in relation to the Fund to be set up following the disaster. Mr Michael Mead of the Treasury Solicitor's Office has informed us that the Dover District Council is establishing a non-charitable discretionary trust fund, with a gift over to charity, and that the Attorney General's guidelines on disaster funds are being followed. I have discussed the matter with the Attorney General and he is content with these arrangements.

As the trust is to be non-charitable, the trustees will not be required to apply a means test when determining how much is to be paid and to whom, and so will be able to make payments quickly and relatively painlessly in the exercise of their own judgment as to hardship. Although the trust will not have the tax advantages of a charitable trust, the intention is to distribute the bulk of the fund within one year, so the tax liability is likely to be small.

Yours sincerely

Peter Milledge

PETER MILLEDGE



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

File JD
cc: fcs
PA

Dear Mr. Ahmed,

Thank you very much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. It was good of you to write, and your condolences will be a support to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Mr. Syed Sharif Ahmed

Also



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

12 March 1987

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister
from:-

General Gnassingbe Eyadema
Elizabeth Hanford Dole

I should be grateful for draft replies
in due course.

Charles Powell

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., MCV.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 March 1987

file 51
cc to
PC

Your Highness

Thank you very much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion, and shall ensure that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

Yours sincerely
Rayan Khalifa

His Highness Shaikh Sa'ad Al Abdullah Al Sabah,
KCMG.

AKO

ZCZC
LNBWAN 9007 OCMIAN 0868
RESTRICTED
OO BREMB
FCOLN TO BREMB
111628Z MAR
GRS 396

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED
HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE
FM FCO
TO IMMEDIATE BRUSSELS
TELNO 56
OF 111628Z MARCH 87

PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR FROM TURNER, HONOURS SECTION:
FERRY DISASTER

1. I HAVE JUST SEEN YOUR TELEGRAM NO. 83. EARLIER PAPERS HAVE BYPASSED BOTH THE CEREMONIAL OFFICER IN THE CABINET OFFICE AND MYSELF. NOR HAVE I BEEN ABLE TO CONSULT THE CEREMONIAL OFFICER WHO IS AWAY TODAY. NEVERTHELESS THE FOLLOWING INTERIM PERSONAL COMMENTS MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE.

2. THE CEREMONIAL OFFICER WILL PROBABLY HAVE THE FUNCTION OF CO-ORDINATING ALL PROPOSALS FOR HONOURS. THE AWARDS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BE MADE FALL INTO THREE TYPES:-

- A) GALLANTRY AWARDS, BOTH HONORARY AND SUBSTANTIVE. YOU SHOULD SEE IN PARTICULAR PARAGRAPH 6 OF DSP. VOL.75 ANNEX 17. IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO ESTABLISHED PRACTICE TO MAKE ANY GALLANTRY AWARDS BEFORE THE FINAL REPORT OF ANY OFFICIAL ENQUIRY IS AVAILABLE, EVEN THOUGH THIS IS UNLIKELY FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME.
- B) SUBSTANTIVE MERITORIOUS AWARDS. THESE WILL PROBABLY ALL BE MADE ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S LIST, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS, FROM WHATEVER ORIGINAL SOURCE, FORMALLY SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT.
- C) HONORARY MERITORIOUS AWARDS. THOUGH ACTION HERE WILL BE PRIMARILY FOR OURSELVES, AND THE FORMAL RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE (WHO TECHNICALLY SHARES IT WITH NEITHER THE PRIME MINISTER NOR ANY OF HIS MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES), WE SHALL NEED SOME STEER FIRST FROM THE CEREMONIAL OFFICER AS TO THE TIMING AND TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSTANTIVE AWARDS ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S LIST. MEANWHILE I CAN RECALL NO PEACE-TIME PRECEDENT FOR A QUOTE SYMBOLIC AWARD UNQUOTE OF THE TYPE YOU SUGGEST, THE QUOTE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE UNQUOTE FOR WHICH COULD BE GIVEN ONLY BY THE QUEEN.

3. I SHALL SEND YOU MORE CONSIDERED ADVICE AND INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MEANWHILE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR ANY ACTUAL PROPOSALS TO BE CONFINED TO QUOTE HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE UNQUOTE CHANNELS, LEAVING US TO CONSULT FURTHER AS NECESSARY. SINCE THE CHIEF CLERK IS AWAY, THE ACTUAL CHAIN OF COMMAND IS THROUGH ROGER HERVEY TO THE PUS.

HOWE

OCMIAN 0868

NNNN

OO FCOLN
FM BREMB TO FCOLN
121040Z MAR
GRS 160

RESTRICTED
HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE
FM BRUSSELS
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 36
OF 121040Z MARCH 37

PERSONAL FOR TURNER, HONOURS SECTION.
YOUR TELNO. 56: FERRY DISASTER.

1. THERE ARE NO PREVIOUS PAPERS IN THE BUREAUCRATIC MEANING, THOUGH I IMAGINE YOU WILL HAVE SEEN THE MEDIA ACCOUNTS OF THE INCIDENT REFERRED TO. AS REGARDS YOUR THREE TYPES OF AWARD I HAVE ALREADY SAID THAT (A) AND (B) WERE BOUND TO TAKE TIME TO INVESTIGATE. MY PROPOSAL FALLS IN YOUR CATEGORY (C) FOR WHICH I IMAGINE THE VIEWS OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHERS WHO SAW THE RESCUE OPERATION AT FIRST HAND WILL BE RELEVANT.
2. MY PURPOSE IN ASKING FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO SUBMISSION OF A RECOMMENDATION THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED URGENTLY (I WAS NOT OF COURSE ASKING FOR THE QUEEN'S AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE AT THIS STAGE) WAS PRECISELY IN ORDER TO SEE IF WE COULD SHORTEN THE PROCEDURAL DELAYS THAT SEEM TO BE IMPLIED BY YOUR TELEGRAM. I DO NOT FOR INSTANCE SEE WHY THE AWARD I AM SUGGESTING NEED NECESSARILY AWAIT ALL THE SUBSTANTIVE ONES. THAT IS A GENERAL POLICY, RATHER THAN AN HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE QUESTION.
3. I THEREFORE STILL AWAIT A REPLY TO MY REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

PETRIE

YYYY

BWLNAN 2595

NNNN

11 MAR 1987/2323

ZCZC DLM6996 NKY733 IOA465 1-0112261070

BXX CO UDNX 085

WASHINGTON DC 85/80 11 1817

HER EXCELLENCY MARGARET THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
LONDON ENGLAND

12/3

DEAR MADAM PRIME MINISTER:

I DEEPLY REGRET THE DISASTER OF THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE
AND WISH TO EXPRESS MY PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND THAT OF THE REAGAN
ADMINISTRATION TO ALL WHO HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY THIS TERRIBLE
TRAGEDY. I APPLAUD YOUR PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE RESCUE
OPERATION.

WITH WARMEST PERSONAL REGARD,

SINCERELY,

ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TLX II 710-822-9426 MARAD WSH

COL 710-822-9426

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquires dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

11.MAR 1987/0958

ZCZC DLM6312 CMB396 WCI090 TOI126 006

XX BY TOL0 139

LONETELEX 139/131 11/3 0900

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43c 187

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

ETATPRIORITE

PRESIREPUBLITOGO

A

SON EXCELLENCE MADAME MARGARET THATCHER

PREMIER MINISTRE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE

LONDRES

198/87/T/PR.-

MADAME LE PREMIER MINISTRE

C EST AVEC UNE PROFONDE EMOTION QUE LE PEUPLE TOGOLAIS A APPRIS LA
TRISTE NOUVELLE DU DRAME SURVENU DANS LA MER DU NORD ET AU COURS
DUQUEL DE NOMBREUX CITOYENS

BRITANIQUE ONT TROUVE LA MORT

DEVANT CETTE CRUELLE EPREUVE QUI FRAPPE VOTRE PAYS JE VOUDRAIS
AU NOM DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS AU NOM DE MON GOUVERNEMENT ET EN MON NOM
PERSONNEL VOUS EXPRIMER NOS TRES VIVES CONDOLEANCES AINSI QUE NOS
SENTIMENTS DE SINCERE SOLIDARITE EN VOUS PRIANT DE BIEN VOULOIR LES

TRANSMETTRE AUX FAMILLES EPOUREES

VEUILLEZ AGREER MADAME LE PREMIER MINISTRE LES ASSURANCES DE MA
TRES HAUTE CONSIDERATION

GENERAL GNASSINGBE EYADEMA PRESIDENT FONDATEUR DU
RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS
PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

gram

enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

7 1291

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British number
dialling instructions

Telecom

British TELECOM

Telephone 01-499 0031
Overseas Cables
BOHICO LONDON W1



Telex No. 262897
Telex Answer Back Code
BOHICO LDN W1

BOTSWANA HIGH COMMISSION

6 Stratford Place
London W1N 9AE

Our Ref HCL 2/3/C I (46)

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T438/87**

11 March, 1987.

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister,

I have the honour to forward the message below from H.E. Dr. Q.K.J. Masire - President of the Republic of Botswana.

Quote

Dear Prime Minister,

It was with a deep sense of sorrow that I learnt of the loss of lives of nationals of your country as a result of the ferry which capsized on the shores of Belgium.

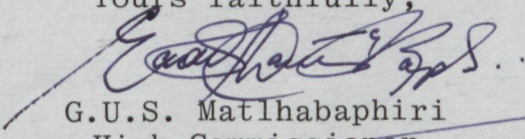
May I convey through you, Prime Minister, our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and our wishes for a speedy recovery to the injured.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Q.K.J. Masire
President of the Republic of Botswana

Unquote

Yours faithfully,


G.U.S. Matlhabaphiri
High Commissioner

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom,
10 Downing Street, London.

050
The Ambassador

CP
Greek Embassy
London

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. TL43A 187

11 March 1987

No.F.867

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

I have the honour to convey the following message from the Prime Minister of Greece.

"The recent maritime tragedy of the "Herald of Free Enterprise" has caused feelings of deep emotion and grief in Greece.

Please accept, on behalf of the Greek people, of my Government and myself, the expression of our deepest condolences and sympathy.

Andreas G. Papandreou"

*Yours sincerely,
S Stathatos*

Stephanos G. Stathatos

The Rt.Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London S.W.I.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 March 1987

'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister from:-

Mr Yitzhak Shamir
Dr Q.K.J. Masire
Dr H. K. Banda
Mr Lubomir Strougal
Dr Franz Uranitzky
Mr Pierre Aubert
Mr Rauf Denktash

I should be grateful for draft replies in due course.

Charles Powell

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., MVO.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

010

CCPC



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 March 1987

Boar Charles

GPR
To issue as amended
AG.

Herald of Free Enterprise

On 9 March you forwarded messages of sympathy and condolence to the Prime Minister from:

- Javier Perez de Cuellar ✓
- Syed Sharif Ahmed ✓
- The Crown Prince of Kuwait ✓
- Erich Honecker ✓
- Felipe Gonzalez Marquez ✓
- The Mayor of Lille ✓
- King Hussein ✓
- M. Chirac ✓
- M. Mitterrand ✓
- President Botha ✓
- Prime Minister Hawke ✓

There was a mistake - put it back in box corrected
R/B
12/3

/ I attach draft replies.

Yours ever

R N Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar
Secretary General of the United Nations
New York

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

I was most grateful for your ~~kind~~ message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge, ^{you had thought} which was much appreciated.

CAVEAT.....

*It was
indeed a
terrible
tragedy*

Enclosures—flag(s).....

DS 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Syed Sharif Ahmed
President
UK Islamic Mission

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

very much

Thank you ^h for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. *It was good of you to write & your condolences will be a support to the families of the victims.*

DS (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING: ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO: Copies to:

Saad Al-Abdalla Al-Sabah
Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

SUBJECT:

Thank you ^{very} so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion, ^{e shall have}

that it is passed on to the families of the victims.

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DS Form 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Herr Erich Honecker
General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

..... In Confidence

Thank you so much for your kind message of
sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge. ^{condolence} Your sympathy will be a

CAVEAT

support to the families of the victims in
their grief.

Enclosures flag(s)

DSI (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

Felipe Gonzalez Marquez
Prime Minister of Spain

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your message of condolence following
the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

I much appreciated your expression of sympathy on this
sad occasion.

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

*It was thoughtful of
you to write and*

Enclosures flag(s)

DS Form 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

M. Pierre Mauroy
Maire de Lille

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

SUBJECT:

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

PM

Enclosures flag(s)

DS (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:
King Hussein

Copies to:

I visited the scene shortly afterwards & saw for myself the scale of the tragedy and the suffering of those who lived and worked there.

SUBJECT:

Thank you ^{very} so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that of your people on this sad occasion.

It will come as a support to the families of the victims in their grief.

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Enclosures flag(s)

DS (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

M. Jacques Chirac
Premier Ministre, France

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

SUBJECT:

It was most kind of you to send a message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

This tragedy has affected not only the people
of Britain but the whole of Europe, ~~and~~ ~~The~~ rescue
operation was a splendid example of European co-operation
responding to a desperate situation. I am very
grateful for the way in which the French authorities
responded at the time.

Thank you for your expression of sympathy.

Enclosures flag(s)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

His Excellency M. Francois Mitterand

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT.....

It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:
President P W Botha

Your Reference

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciate your expression of sympathy on this sad occasion.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Mr Hawke
Prime Minister of Australia

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge.

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts
of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this sad
time.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

010

Handwritten notes and initials in the top right corner.



EMBASSY OF ISRAEL
2 PALACE GREEN
LONDON W8 4QB
Telephone: 01-937 8050

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T42A/87

10th March 1987

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

I have the honour to transmit the following message from Prime Minister Shamir:

"It is with deep sorrow that I learnt the sad news about the tragic accident involving "The Herald of Free Enterprise" which has taken such a heavy toll of human lives. I extend to your Excellency our condolences and through you our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families".

Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of Israel.

May I add my own sincere expressions of condolence.

Yours respectfully

Handwritten signature of Yehuda Avner

Yehuda Avner
Ambassador of Israel

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquiries
shown in your dialling instructions

10 MAR 1987/1136

Swi

ZC DLM5270 NBE634 JABF5179

GRXX BY CHBX 078

BERN 78/70 10 1230 PAGE 1/50

ETATPRIORITE

SON EXCELLENCE

LA TRES HONORABLE MARGRET THATCHER

PREMIER MINISTRE DU ROYAUME-UNI DE

GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD

LONDON

Ru/3

5186 AU NOM DU CONSEIL FEDERAL SUISSE VIVEMENT EMU PAR LE NAUFRAGE DU
FERRY-BOAT QUI ENDEUILLE TRAGIQUEMENT VOTRE PAYS JE PRIE VOTRE
EXCELLENCE DE RECEVOIR ET DE BIEN VOULOIR TRANSMETTRE AUX

COL 5186

JABF5179 LA TRES HONORABLE MARGRET THATCHER PAGE 2/20

FAMILLES DES VICTIMES MES TRES SINCERES CONDOLEANCES ET L'ASSURANCE
DE MA PROFONDE SYMPATHIE

PIERRE AUBERT

PRESIDENT DE LA CONFEDERATION SUISSE

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

TURKISH EMBASSY

LONDON

3100/18E-43-87

MAED

✓ ERS

SED

2/18/87

The Turkish Charge d'Affaires a.i. presents his compliments to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and has the honour to request that the enclosed message from His Excellency Mr. Turgut Ozal, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, to the Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher MP., Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, be forwarded to its high destination.

The Turkish Charge d'Affaires a.i. avails himself of this opportunity to renew to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs the assurance of his highest consideration.

London, 10 March, 1987



Her Majesty's Principal
Secretary of State for
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs,
Downing Street, London SW1A 2AL.

SUBJECT CC OPS
MASTER

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T43/87

TEXT OF MESSAGE

"THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
MARGARET THATCHER MP
PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

I HEARD WITH DEEP SORROW THE NEWS ABOUT THE TRAGIC LOSS
OF LIVES IN THE ACCIDENT IN ZEEBRUGGE.

ON BEHALF OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT AND ON MY BEHALF I
WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AND MY
DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AND TO THE BEREAVED
FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS.

TURGUT OZAL
PRIME MINISTER OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY"

010

Prime Minister²



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

Andy Bearpark Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

10 March 1987

Dear Andy,

ms

CHANNEL FERRY DISASTER FUND

As I have told you by telephone, we are in close touch with Dover District Council to make sure that the fund is properly set up with a satisfactory trust deed. Michael Mead from the Treasury Solicitor's Office, with detailed knowledge of the earlier cases, attended a meeting in Dover this morning with the Council and the trustees of the Bradford fund. The Attorney General's guidelines will be carefully followed, as in the Bradford model, with a discretionary trust able to make awards quickly in accordance with the trustees' judgement on hardship. We shall be shown the trust deeds in draft to check against the guidelines. The appeal has been given wide publicity, and it is hoped to begin making payments within the next few days. In the view of Transport Ministers, Dover are much to be commended for their prompt and skilful action, with the benefit of expert legal advice.

It is agreed that the Government should nominate a trustee from outside the Dover area. The trustees will need to meet frequently over the next few weeks (probably in Dover), and it has not been easy to find someone suitable who can spare the time, but Sir Peter Lazarus has now agreed to take this on, and we hope that his name will be announced with the other trustees tomorrow. The way will then be clear to pay in the Government contribution to the fund.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Attorney-General's office.

Yours,
Jon.

JON CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary

P&O

With the Compliments of

Sir Jeffrey Sterling, C.B.E.
Chairman

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
79 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EJ
Telephone: 01-930 4343 Telex: 885551 Fax: 01-930 8572

AR no
see
ON

Prime Minister

CDP
10/3

It is done
myself. per



1837 **150** 1987
YEARS

2

P R E S S R E L E A S E
ISSUED TODAY, TUESDAY, 10th MARCH, 1987
BY TOWNSEND THORESEN

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

Townsend Thoresen is to make an ex-gratia payment of £2,000 to dependants of those who lost their lives and those who are missing in the HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE accident.

This payment is to help with any immediate financial problems their families may have and does not prejudice their right to pursue any claims.

In addition, callers to the family hotline in Dover will be advised how to make initial claims in connection with loss of clothes, cash and personal belongings and given information on all aspects of any claims they may have.

Every effort is being made to eliminate bureaucratic procedures. The Company hopes to be making payments tomorrow, once written claims are received.

Additionally, the Company is arranging for transportation of the deceased to their home town from Dover and for payment of the funeral expenses.

- ends -



file DT5

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

10 March 1987

Dear Squadron Leader Dixon,

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your marvellous effort in flying her at short notice to Zeebrugge on Saturday. It was a very sad occasion, but she appreciated your help enormously and was most grateful.

I enclose signed photographs for those members of the crew who have not already received one.

C D POWELL

Squadron Leader Dixon.

D10

cc/c



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone ~~0X-830X7822X~~ 01-218 2111/3

MO 19/1V

10th March 1987

CDD
10/3

Dear Charles,

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER

I understand that the Prime Minister has enquired about reimbursement of the cost of the rescue operation following the loss of the Herald of Free Enterprise on Friday night. We are aware of no precedent for HMG reimbursing another government for assistance rendered in an international rescue operation such as this; when lives are at stake, costs usually lie where they fall.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Allan (Department of Transport).

(I C F ANDREWS)
Private Secretary

Charles Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

~~CEPE~~



With the compliments of
RN Ambler
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

For Mr Powell's
info ASAP

RM
10/3.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
SW1A 2AH

010

CCPE

FROM: J S Wall

DATE : 10 March 1987

cc: PS

PS/Lady Young

PS/Mrs Chalker

PS/Mr Eggar

PS/PUS

Mr Braithwaite

Mr Renwick

Mr Barrington

MAED

WED

Information Department

Consular Department

Mr Goulden, UKRep(mufax)

Mr Budd, Cabinet Office

Ms Lambert, D/Tp

Mr Grant, News Department

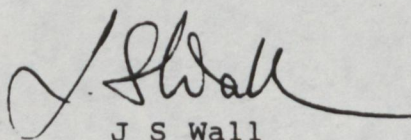
EUROPEAN COMMISSION GIFT TO THE ZEEBRUGGE FUND

1. The Commission have announced that they are contributing 250,000 ecu (£175,000) to the Zeebrugge Fund. You may also have seen that a minute's silence was observed at Finance Council (Ecofin) yesterday. Flags are flying at half mast outside Community buildings in Brussels today.

2. Mrs Chalker's thanks, on behalf of the Government, have already been expressed to the Commission. We agreed that you would make the following announcement at the 12.30 press conference today:

/Mrs

"Mrs Chalker has expressed the Government's thanks for the 250,000 ecu (£175,000) which the Commission are giving to the Zeebrugge Fund. She said: "We deeply appreciate this expression of sympathy and of prompt and practical support from the whole of the European Community for those who suffered in the disaster."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J S Wall', with a stylized flourish at the end.

J S Wall

European Community Department
(Internal)

cc/c



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 March 1987

GR
4 letters to
issue.
aj

Dear Charles

Herald of Free Enterprise

On 8 March, you forwarded messages of sympathy from Chancellor Kohl, President Babangida of Nigeria, the Taoiseach, and the Prime Minister of Norway.

/ I attach draft replies.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Herr Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal
Republic of Germany

Secret

Copies to:

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you ^{very} so much for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge. I much appreciated your kind thoughts at this sad time. I shall pass on your condolences to the families of the victims.

CAVEAT.....

May I also say how very grateful I am for the part played in the rescue operations by the German Navy. They undoubtedly contributed to saving many lives and to preventing worse disasters. It was most heartening to witness this example of close cooperation between European friends and neighbours. I should be grateful if you would pass on my thanks to all those concerned.

CHD.

DA2464

Enclosures—flag(s).....

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

President Babangida of Nigeria

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

SUBJECT:

Thank you so much for your kind message of
condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise
disaster at Zeebrugge.

CAVEAT

It is most comforting to know that the thoughts
of our Commonwealth friends are with us at this
sad time.

ESP

Enclosures flag(s)

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
The Prime Minister
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

The Taoiseach

*Mr Charles Haughey
T.D. J.A. 122*

SUBJECT:

*Write to express my gratitude to the
T.D. J.A. 122*

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

~~Thank you so much for your kind message of sympathy following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.~~

It is comforting to know that the thoughts of our friends and neighbours are with us at this sad time.

Enclosures flag(s)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
The Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Your Reference

The Prime Minister of Norway

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

SUBJECT:

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your message of condolence following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge.

I ^{was} much appreciated your expression of sympathy and that ~~of your~~ ^{you} people on this sad occasion.

Enclosures—flag(s).....



DISASTERS

HERALD OF ~~DISASTERS~~

ENTERPRISE

3/47

R11

PETER ROST M.P.

Prime Minister²



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt.Hon.Margaret Thatcher M.P.
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON
SW1A

01-219-3000

Secretary & Messages

04427 6123

9th of March, 1987

Dear Prime Minister

md

I feel that I must write to tell you how much your meeting with young Martin Hartley, the little eight year old boy who lost his whole family in the ferry disaster, has been appreciated in our Ilkeston area. He is obviously going to have a very difficult time ahead of him and one hopes that the 'good' memories of the love and care which has surrounded him, will eventually help him to endure the lingering 'bad' ones.

The Erewash Borough Council has already started an appeal fund for Martin with a donation of £1,000 and both the Social Services and the local police have come together to help support this young lad and his young step-brother. Obviously, I will do what I can to help to further their cause. Although money cannot replace the family that these two have lost in such tragic and traumatic circumstances, through fund raising our local community can ensure that their loss does not lead to a life of deprivation and little support.

Thank you so much for your care and your concern.

Yours Ever

Peter

*Subject cc OPS
master*

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T41/87

Embassy of Lebanon
21 Kensington Palace Gardens

London, W.8
Ref: 82/AEH/cg

97 MAR 1987

The Embassy of Lebanon presents its compliments to The Protocol Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to request that they forward the enclosed message from President Amine Gemayel to The Prime Minister.

"The tragic accident which occurred with the sinking of the Herald of Free Enterprise, and the terrible loss of so many British lives has left me profoundly shocked and saddened.

May I express, on my behalf, and on that of the Government and people of Lebanon, my sincerest condolences and deepest sympathies for the families of all those who have so tragically died.

Amine Gemayel
President of the Republic of Lebanon."

The Embassy of Lebanon avails itself of this opportunity to renew to The Protocol Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the assurance of its highest consideration.

London 9th March 1987



The Protocol Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Whitehall
London SW1.



EMBASSY OF THE SOCIALIST FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

5 LEXHAM GARDENS,
LONDON W8 5JU.
Tel: 01-370 6105

London, 9 March 1987

Dear Madame Prime Minister,

I have the honour to transmit the message by the President of the Federal Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Branko Mikulic addressed to you on the occasion of the tragic disaster of the British ferry.

May I take this opportunity, dear Madame Prime Minister, to extend to you also my own sincere sympathies.

Please accept, Madame Prime Minister, the assurances of my highest consideration and profound respect.

Mitko Calovski
Ambassador

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland

London.

PCO for draft reply
a

010



New Zealand High Commission
London

FCO
cc/le
for chair
myh
CDD 9/3

9 March 1987

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister and First Lord of
the Treasury
No 10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

1
...TER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. THIE/87
SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

Dear Mrs Thatcher

I have just been asked to pass on to you the following message from our Prime Minister:

"My dear Prime Minister

New Zealanders have been horrified to learn of the tragic sinking of one of the channel ferries at the weekend off the Belgian coast. The heavy loss of life among British passengers must have come as a great shock to you and your people. We in New Zealand extend our condolences and sympathy to those who have suffered.

Yours sincerely
David Lange"

May I add that I and all my staff share the feelings expressed by our Prime Minister.

*Yours sincerely
Bryce Harland*

(Bryce Harland)
High Commissioner

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

NNNN

09 MAR 1987/1225

ZCZC ELM7746 NXA667 NCC043 AC38

GBXX CY CYNC 090

NICOSIA 90/88 9 1350

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T41C/87

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPSS

ETAT

THEI RIGHT HONOURABLE MRS MARGARET THATCHER,
MP PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND 10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON

R10/3

WE WERE GREATLY SADDENED BY THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT OF THE FERRY BOAT
'HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE' AND THE LOSS OF SO MANY HUMAN LIVES
ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF CYPRUS I EXPRESS OUR
DEEP SORROW AND REQUEST YOUR EXCELLENCY TO CONVEY TO THE RELATIVES OF
THOSE LOST OUR SINCERE SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES

SPYROS KYPRIANOU
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

COL ETAT

FCO & dmr
✓

number of instructions shown in your dialling instructions
British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
T 1291
Telegram
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. TL41B/87

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE
ASSEMBLY OF THE SOCIALIST
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

Belgrade, 9 March 1987

We were much distressed to hear the news of the terrible disaster of the British cross-Channel ferry taking a heavy toll of human life.

May I extend to you personally and to Her Majesty's Government, on behalf of the Federal Executive Council and myself, our sincere sympathy.

Please convey to the bereaved families the expressions of our profound condolence.

(Sgd) Branko Mikulic

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
London.

NNNN

b

09 MAR 1987/0804

ZCZC DLM3756 ZMA193 TXR1121

GBXX CO ZALU 132

LUSAKA 132/131 08 1135

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T41A/87

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

R10/3

ETAT

THE RT. HON. MRS MARGARET THATCHER

PRIME MINISTER

NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON

IT WAS WITH A SENSE OF GREAT SHOCK AND GRIEF THAT WE RECEIVED THE
SAD NEWS OF THE CAR FERRY TRAGEDY OFF THE COAST OF BELGIUM ON
FRIDAY NIGHT WHICH CLAIMED THE LIVES OF MORE THAN

COL NO MOP

TXR 1121 PAGE 2/50

ONE HUNDRED PEOPLE ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIAN THEIR
PARTY AND ITS GOVERNMENT, AND INDEED ON MY OWN BEHALF, PLEASE ACCEPT
THIS MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES TO YOUR PRIME MINISTER, YOUR GOVERNMENT
AND IN PARTICULAR, TO THE FAMILIES OF ALL THOSE BEREAVED IN THE
TRAGEDY. ALLOW ME ALSO TO

COL NIL

TXR 1121 PAGE 3/31

CONVEY OUR MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY AND WISHES OF SPEEDY RECOVERY TO THE
THE INJURED.

MAY THE SOULS OF THE DECEASED REST IN PEACE.

KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

MAED
OPS
SAD

EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN

CHANCERY DIVISION

35 LOWNDES SQUARE,
LONDON, SW1 9JN

TELEPHONE : 01-235 2044 Ext.....

No. Pol. 4/55/86.

March 9, 1987.

The Embassy of Pakistan presents its compliments to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to request that the following message from General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, may kindly be conveyed to the Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister:

Begins:

Excellency,

I have been shocked to hear the sad news of the capsizing of a British Car Ferry off the coast of Belgium which has resulted in a major loss of life. I share your grief at this calamity and offer my heart-felt condolences and profound sympathies to the bereaved families. I pray to the Almighty Allah that He grant them courage to face up to this tragic and irreparable loss with patience and fortitude.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq
President of the Islamic
Republic of Pakistan.

Ends.

The Embassy of Pakistan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the assurances of its highest consideration.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
LONDON SW1.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T41D/87
SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

filed as +

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

MVAED
cc PS
SAD.
JL 19/3.

EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN
CHANCERY DIVISION
35 LOWNDES SQUARE,
LONDON, SW1 9JN
TELEPHONE : 01-235 2044 Ext.....

No.Pol.4/55/86.

March 9, 1987.

The Embassy of Pakistan presents its compliments to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to request that the following message from Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo may kindly be conveyed to the Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Britain:

Begins:

Excellency,

I have been shocked to learn the news of the disastrous capsizing of a British Car Ferry off the coast of Belgium in which several valuable lives are reported to have been lost. The Government and people of Pakistan join me in sharing your national grief and in offering our sincerest condolences and profound sympathies to the bereaved families over this tragic loss of life. We pray to God that He grant courage and fortitude to the bereaved to bear this irreparable loss and suffering with dignity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Mohammad Khan Junejo,
Prime Minister of the Islamic
Republic of Pakistan.

Ends.

The Embassy of Pakistan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the assurances of its highest consideration.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
LONDON SW1.



ZCZC DLM1805 PLB545 AQL160 QBB755 PIB817 IIB746

XXXX CO FRXX 097

LLECAL 97/90 7 1408 PAGE 1/50

MME MARGARET THATCHER
PREMIER MINISTRE
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1

9.3

L ANNONCE DE LA TERRIBLE CATASTROPHE DE ZEEBRUGGE , DONT
ON PEUT CRAINDRE QU'ELLE TOUCHE UN NOMBRE IMPORTANT DE VOS
CONCITOYENS , NOUS BOULVERSE .
EN CES CIRCONSTANCES DRAMATIQUES ET AU NOM DE L'AMITE QUI ME LIE
A LA

COL 10 , ,

IIB746 PAGE 2/40

GRANDE BRETAGNE ET A SON PEUPLE , JE VOUS ASSURE DE MA
RESPECTUEUSE SYMPATHIE AUJOURD'HUI ATTRISTEE , ET VOUS DEMANDE
DE BIEN VOULOIR TRANSMETTRE AUX FAMILLES DES VICTIMES MES
CONDOLEANCES EMUES

PIERRE MAUROY DEPUTE MAIRE DE LILLE ANCIEN PREMIER MINISTRE

COL , ,

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
Telegram
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
WORLDWIDE
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions
Telegram
for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

FCO for change
RMJ CD

CCPC

Unofficial translation

MRS. MARGARET THATCHER,
PRIME-MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN,
LONDON

Dear Mrs. Prime-Minister,

Accept our sincere condolences in connection with the catastrophe in the North Sea of the British passenger ship, which brought about loss of human lives.

Please, convey our deep sympathy to the families of the bereaved.

Council of Ministers
of the USSR,
Moscow
Kremlin
March 9, 1987

ГОСПОЖЕ МАРГАРЕТ ТЭТЧЕР,
ПРЕМЬЕР-МИНИСТРУ ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ,
ЛОНДОН

Уважаемая г-жа премьер-министр,

Примите искренние соболезнования в связи с катастрофой
в Северном море британского пассажирского судна, повлекшей
за собой человеческие жертвы.

Просьба передать глубокое сочувствие семьям погибших.

Совет Министров СССР

Москва,

Кремль

9 марта 1987 г.



Jill *do*

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 March, 1987.

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE DISASTER

I enclose messages to the Prime Minister
from:

Javier Perez de Cuellar
Syed Sharif Ahmed
The Crown Prince of Kuwait
Erich Honecker
Felipe Gonzalez Marquez
The Mayor of Lille
King Hussein
Monsieur Chirac
Monsieur Mitterrand
President Botha
Prime Minister Hawke.

I should be grateful for draft replies
in due course.

(C.D. Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., MVO,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

er

British TELECOM

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Tele

Telegram for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

Tele

*FCO to
dhr. u/m*

09 MAR 1987/1008

ZCZC DLM3879 NBE474 CLAA6194

GBXX CO CHBX 034

CHENEBOUGERIES 34/32 09 1055

(Handwritten circle around the routing information)

R10

PREMIER MRS MARGARET THATCHER

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON *SW1*

PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCEREST CONDOLENCES FOR THE VICTIMS OF ZEEBRUGGE
CATASTROPHE

DR SALIM WAKIM FORMER CAND. FOR LEBANON PRESIDENCY

POB 699 1211 GENEVA 3

COL 10 699 1211 3

(Handwritten marks below the COL number)

010

CCP 2



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
LONDON

I must say

Prime Minister

*CDP
1/3*

mt

March 9, 1987

Dear Prime Minister:

Carol and I want to let you know how deeply we feel the terrible loss of so many lives on the ferry "Herald of Free Enterprise". This was truly a tragedy that touched people everywhere.

I know that the President has spoken with you to convey his own condolences and to offer whatever assistance we can provide. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there is any way at all we can help.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Price, II
Ambassador

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

010

Pré Mitterrand ccpc (2)

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
LONDRES

*CDP
9/3*

L'AMBASSADEUR

9th March, 1986

Dear Prime Minister

I have just received the text of a message addressed to you by Monsieur François Mitterrand, Président de la République.

7.3.86

I enclose it herewith.

Yours sincerely

Luc de La Barre

Luc de La Barre de Nanteuil

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister,
10, Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

mb

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
LONDRES

L'AMBASSADEUR

9th March, 1987

copy
(2)

Rie Minister

cm

Dec Riv Minister

I have just received the text of a message addressed to you by Monsieur Jacques Chirac, Premier Ministre.

73.86

I enclose it herewith.

*Yves M...
Luc de La Barre de Nanteuil*

Luc de La Barre de Nanteuil

Luc de La Barre de Nanteuil

mt

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister,
10, Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

SUBJECT
CC MASTER



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

File 81

cc Bg

(28)

From the Private Secretary

9 March 1987

ZEEBRUGGE

Sir Jeffrey Sterling called to see the Prime Minister this afternoon on his return from Zeebrugge. Two points arose which are worth recording.

First, Sir Jeffrey reported that the Bishop of Dover, who had been present at a service in Zeebrugge today, had said he hoped there would at some stage be a memorial service to be held in Canterbury Cathedral.

Secondly, the Prime Minister said that people who had been involved in the rescue operation would be considered for gallantry or other awards at the appropriate time. These would be honorary in the case of nationals of other countries. Sir Jeffrey said he had asked that a note should be kept of the names of those who had been involved. P&O representatives should accordingly be able to help our Embassy in Brussels when the time comes to make recommendations.

I am copying this letter to Tony Galsworthy (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

DAVID NORGROVE

Richard Allan, Esq.,
Department of Transport

285

ZEEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER

WITH PERMISSION MR SPEAKER I WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT THE LOSS OF THE VESSEL HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE.

SHORTLY BEFORE 7.00 PM GMT ON FRIDAY 6 MARCH THE ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF PASSENGER FERRY HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE CAPSIZED, WITHOUT WARNING, IN A POSITION ABOUT THREE-QUARTERS OF A MILE OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE TO THE PORT OF ZEEBRUGGE. SHE HAD LEFT ZEEBRUGGE ABOUT HALF AN HOUR BEFORE ON A PASSAGE TO DOVER. IT IS MY SAD DUTY TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT A TOTAL OF 53 PEOPLE ARE KNOWN TO HAVE DIED AND 82 OTHERS ARE BELIEVED TO BE MISSING. A TOTAL OF 408 PASSENGERS AND CREW WERE RESCUED. I AM SURE THAT THE WHOLE HOUSE WOULD WISH TO JOIN ME IN EXPRESSING OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE BEREAVED AND THE INJURED.

IMMEDIATELY THE TRAGEDY OCCURRED THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES TOOK CHARGE OF THE SEARCH AND RESCUE ARRANGEMENTS, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM HM COASTGUARD AND THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE RESCUE CO-ORDINATION CENTRE AT PLYMOUTH. TWO BRITISH WARSHIPS WERE IMMEDIATELY DESPATCHED TO THE SCENE, TOGETHER WITH SEARCH AND RESCUE HELICOPTERS CARRYING DIVERS AND OTHER RESCUE EQUIPMENT. I WISH TO PAY TRIBUTE TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THE RESCUE ARRANGEMENTS, AND PARTICULARLY TO THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES AND THE

BELGIAN PEOPLE, WITHOUT WHOSE SPEEDY RESPONSE THE CASUALTIES WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH GREATER. I SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE POLICE, HOSPITALS AND FIRE SERVICES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CHANNEL, THE STAFF OF TOWNSEND THORESEN AND THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND HIS STAFF IN BELGIUM FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE TO THE INJURED AND BEREAVED,

A TEAM OF MARINE SURVEYORS FROM MY DEPARTMENT LED BY CAPTAIN VALE HAVE BEGUN TO CONDUCT A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF THIS VESSEL.

I HAVE DECIDED THAT A FULL FORMAL INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE HELD INTO THIS DISASTER, IT WILL BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS. I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT AFTER CONSULTATION WITH MY RT HON AND LEARNED FRIEND THE LORD CHANCELLOR, THE HON MR JUSTICE SHEEN THE ADMIRALTY JUDGE, HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO BE THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE INVESTIGATION, HE WILL BE ASSISTED BY 4 ASSESSORS WHO WILL BE APPOINTED SHORTLY. THE DATE AND VENUE FOR THE INQUIRY WILL BE ANNOUNCED WHEN ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE, BUT I AM ANXIOUS THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DELAY.

IT WILL BE FOR THE FORMAL INVESTIGATION TO INVESTIGATE THE CAUSES OF THIS DISASTER AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE THAT ALL POSSIBLE LESSONS ARE LEARNT. BUT THE PRELIMINARY REPORTS WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED SUGGEST THAT THE CAUSE OF THE CAPSIZE OF THE VESSEL WAS AN INRUSH OF WATER THROUGH THE BOW LOADING DOORS. I HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THIS WAS DUE TO ANY FUNDAMENTAL FAULT IN THE DESIGN OF THE SHIP.

MY DEPARTMENT HAVE TODAY EMBARKED ON A PROGRAMME OF CHECKS ON RO-RO SHIPS LEAVING UK PORTS TO ENSURE THAT ALL LOADING 'DOOR MECHANISMS ARE IN WORKING ORDER; THAT OFFICERS AND CREW ARE AWARE OF THE OPERATING PROCEDURES AND THAT ALL OPENINGS IN THE HULL AND SUPERSTRUCTURE MUST BE CLOSED BEFORE THEY PROCEED TO SEA IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS, AND THAT RECOMMENDATIONS OF SAFE PRACTICE SHOULD BE OBSERVED.

I AM ALSO ADVISING OWNERS OF RO-RO FERRIES TO FIT WARNING LIGHTS ON THE BRIDGE OF THE VESSELS TO SHOW WHETHER OR NOT THE LOADING DOORS ARE PROPERLY CLOSED. I SHALL CONSIDER WHETHER OR NOT TO MAKE THIS A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT.

408
M No 3

UNDERSTANDABLY THERE IS ANXIETY ABOUT THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OF THE INJURED AND BEREAVED BOTH IMMEDIATELY AND IN THE LONGER TERM. AS REGARDS IMMEDIATE NEEDS IN ZEEBRUGGE, THE BRITISH CONSUL AND HIS STAFF ARE OFFERING ALL POSSIBLE CONSULAR ASSISTANCE. IN THIS COUNTRY, THE DHSS IS PROVIDING EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT PEOPLE ARRIVING AT GATWICK AND DOVER CAN BE GIVEN IMMEDIATE HELP. AS REGARDS CONCERN ABOUT LONGER TERM FINANCIAL ENTITLEMENTS A TEAM FROM DHSS IS GOING OUT TO ZEEBRUGGE TODAY TO GIVE ADVICE ON THE SPOT.

I UNDERSTAND P&O HAVE ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THEY HAVE SET ASIDE £1M TO MEET IMMEDIATE PERSONAL NEEDS OF THOSE IN DISTRESS FOLLOWING THE TRAGEDY. THIS FUND WILL BE HANDLED BY THE TOWNSEND THORESEN OFFICE IN DOVER. THE COMPANY WILL ALSO BE ADVERTISING IN THE NATIONAL PRESS TOMORROW WITH DETAILS OF THE CENTRAL POINT FOR CLAIMS. I HAVE THEIR ASSURANCE THAT ALL CLAIMS WILL BE DEALT WITH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

ON THE INITIATIVE OF DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL, A CHANNEL FERRY DISASTER FUND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO ASSIST THE VICTIMS AND THEIR RELATIVES. THIS WILL NOT AFFECT CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION. THE GOVERNMENT IS CONTRIBUTING £1M TO THE FUND. PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL TO THIS PAYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT IN A SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPLY ESTIMATE FOR THE TRANSPORT SERVICES AND CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION VOTE. PENDING THAT APPROVAL, THE £1M DONATION WILL BE MET BY A REPAYABLE ADVANCE FROM THE CONTINGENCIES FUND.

But possibly the amount

S.21 /
M...
Shipping ...
Comm ...
procedures

EVERY YEAR SOME 28 MILLION PASSENGERS ARE SAFELY CARRIED ON UNITED KINGDOM FERRIES AND IT IS TRAGIC THAT OUR FINE RECORD OF SAFETY HAS BEEN MARRED BY THIS DISASTER. I SHARE THE GRIEF AND ANGUISH OF THOSE WHO ARE BEREAVED, AND OF THOSE WHO ARE STILL UNCERTAIN OF THE FATE OF THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES : I AM SURE THE THOUGHTS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE ARE WITH THEM.

CCPC

010

AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN.



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

Abledy o'kin

CDP

9/3

Mr. C.D. Powell
Private Secretary
to the Prime Minister
Prime Minister's Office
No.10 Downing Street
London SW1

*0001-695211
Mark Dickenson
David Holt.*

9 March 1987

Dear Private Secretary,

I enclose herewith the text of a message to the Rt. Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP Prime Minister from Dr. Garret Fitzgerald TD Taoiseach concerning the Zeebrugge tragedy. The text of the message was conveyed to the duty officer in Downing Street by an Embassy officer by phone on Saturday 7 March.

yours sincerely

Cliona Manahan Leslie

Cliona Manahan Leslie
Private Secretary
to the Ambassador

Already ^{it'd} M.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

I wish to convey to you, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Irish Government and people, the profound shock with which we learned of the tragedy yesterday at Zeebrugge. We extend our deepest sympathy to all those bereaved and injured in this tragedy and to their families.

Yours sincerely,

Garret FitzGerald

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

ANNEX A

Press Statement issued by GIS, Dublin,
Saturday, 7 March 1987

The Taoiseach has conveyed a message of sympathy expressing deep shock on his own behalf and on behalf of the Government and the Irish people to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, and in it he extended sympathy to the relatives of those bereaved and injured in the tragedy.

He has also sent a message to Prime Minister Marten of Belgium in praise of the search and rescue efforts of the Belgian authorities and those who have been assisting.



10 DOWNING STREET

COP

Ian Andrews, MDD
telephoned whilst you
were at lunch.

Firstly to confirm the
line he gave you over
the weekend that the
Royal Navy doesn't have
sufficient salvage assets
to cover such an operation
as the Herald of Free Enterprise.

Secondly he had heard that
the Prime Minister was
enquiring as to the cost
of the rescue activities
and whether there would
be a requirement to
reimburse the Belgians.
Ian Andrews had been
offered some advice

PTB

on this and would be
happy to pass it on
if you would like to
telephone him.

Amanda

9.3.87



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T40187

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

Filed on DISASTERS:

Herald of Free Enterprise Mar 87

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

I write to say how deeply grateful I am to the Belgian Government, the provincial and local authorities, the hospital and emergency services and indeed, the Belgian people as a whole for their rescue operation mounted after the sinking of the Herald of Free Enterprise. The speed of the response undoubtedly saved many lives and prevented an even worse tragedy. And the standards of medical and humanitarian care provided to the survivors could not have been bettered. The operation was made up of countless acts of personal heroism and dedication. Time and again as we went round the hospitals together the survivors spoke to you of their gratitude for everything which had been done for them. I could see that it was deeply felt, and I echo it on behalf of the British Government. Shared experiences such as these, however tragic, help to bring peoples and countries closer together.

We are all particularly thankful to Their Majesties The King and Queen of the Belgians for visiting the site of the disaster and speaking to the injured and bereaved. This spontaneous expression of their grief and concern has touched the hearts of people in this country.

May I also thank you and Madame Martens for your great personal courtesy and kindness in accompanying me on my brief visit to Zeebrugge and the surrounding hospitals. I was very glad to be able to thank personally so many of those involved in the rescue. And I know that the British survivors whom we met were touched by your personal concern for them.

I should be most grateful if you would pass my thanks to all those concerned, including in particular your Minister of Communications, Mr. de Croo, the Provincial Governor, the President of the Harbour Board, the Harbour Master, the military and civilian personnel involved in the rescue, and the hospital and emergency services staff who responded so magnificently.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely
Raymond Shalton

His Excellency Monsieur Wilfried Martens.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 March 1987

Dear Ambassador,

I am very grateful indeed for the most impressive way in which you and the Embassy staff in Brussels worked with the Belgian authorities to care for the survivors of the Herald of Free Enterprise tragedy. It was very clear that every effort was being made to comfort, reassure and look after the survivors, and assemble the necessary details about them. I should be grateful if you would pass on my thanks to all the members of your staff.

Thank you also for responding so quickly and readily to my decision to visit Zeebrugge and for the excellent arrangements made at such short notice. I hope that I was able to convey something of the deep feelings of gratitude in our country for the Belgian rescue effort. I have written separately to Mr. Martens to underline this.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. P. C. Petrie, C.M.G.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

9 March 1987

From the Private Secretary

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

I attach letters from the Prime Minister to Mr Martens, Mr Lubbers and President Mitterrand.

That to Mr Martens should if possible be delivered today, ideally the original but if not the text should be telegraphed.

Those to Mr Lubbers and President Mitterrand should be despatched only when you have established firmly from the Embassy in Brussels that Netherlands and French personnel were involved directly and significantly in rescue operations. I have relied on press reports.

I also enclose a letter to HM Ambassador in Brussels.

I am copying this letter to Richard Allen (Department of Transport).

Charles Powell

A.C. Galsworthy, Esq., CMG.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS



THE ROYAL THAI EMBASSY,
30, QUEEN'S GATE,
LONDON, SW7 5JB.

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE**
SERIAL No. T39B/87

8th March 1987

MAED
✓ PS
SEAD
LORDS
PSE

ay
[Signature]

Dear Secretary of State,

I have the honour to convey through Your Excellency to The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the message from His Excellency General Prem Tinsulanonda, Prime Minister of Thailand, on the "Zeebrugge" tragic maritime accident as follows:

Begin

"I was shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the dreadful ferry tragedy at Zeebrugge. On behalf of the Government and the people of Thailand, I should like to send my heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families and to all those who have lost their loved ones in this horrible accident.

General Prem Tinsulanonda
Prime Minister of Thailand"

End

Accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

S. Prasasvinitchai

Sudhee Prasasvinitchai
Ambassador



'T'd below

Amman

8 March, 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

I have learnt of the tragic accident which involved so many British subjects with deep regret and great sorrow.

My people and my Government join me in extending to you, and through you to the bereaved families of the innocent victims our heartfelt sympathy and sincere condolences. May the Almighty God grant the victims of this tragedy eternal peace, and may He bestow the blessings of patience and wisdom on members of their families to accept His will.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain & Northern Ireland
10 Downing Street
London SW1
England

QTC 000

CBL434

SUBSECT
CC MASTER
OPS

1
2

NIL ALL

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T39A/87

Prime Minister
COP 9/13

ZCZCLCB501

AAAA

081522Z MAR 87

FM LONDON

TO CABINET OFFICE 174 IMMEDIATE

BT

S E C R E T

FROM DUTY OFFICER LONDON

FOR DUTY OFFICER CABINET OFFICE

OUR TELECON 08 MAR 87

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM AMMAN

BEGINS

MRS. MARGARET THATCHER,

I HAVE LEARNED OF THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT WHICH INVOLVED
SO MANY BRITISH SUBJECTS WITH DEEP REGRET AND GREAT
SORROW.
MY PEOPLE AND MY GOVERNMENT JOIN ME IN EXTENDING TO YOU,
AND THROUGH YOU TO THE BEREAVED FAMILIES OF
THE INNOCENT VICTIMS OUR HEARTFELT SYMPATHY
AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES. MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD GRANT
THE VICTIMS OF THIS TRAGEDY ETERNAL PEACE, AND
MAY HE BESTOW THE BLESSINGS OF PATIENCE AND WISDOM
ON MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES TO ACCEPT HIS WILL.

YOUR SINCERE FRIEND
HUSSEIN II

ENDS

GRS 00119

NNNN

mt



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T39/87

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

8 March 1987

Dear Mr. President.

After visiting the scene of the Herald of Free Enterprise tragedy yesterday, may I say how very grateful I am for the part played in the rescue operation by French emergency services. They undoubtedly contributed to saving many lives and to preventing an even worse disaster. It was a heart-warming example of co-operation between European friends and neighbours. I should be grateful if my thanks could be expressed to all those concerned.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Monsieur Francois Mitterrand, G.C.B.



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T38/87

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

8 March 1987

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Prime Minister,

On return from my brief visit to the scene of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster at Zeebrugge yesterday, may I thank you most warmly for the part played in the rescue operations by emergency services from The Netherlands. Their contribution undoubtedly helped to save many lives and to prevent an even worse tragedy. It was a heart-warming example of co-operation. I should be grateful if my thanks and appreciation could be passed on to all those concerned.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Dr. Ruud F. M. Lubbers.



File 116
cdi PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

8 March 1987

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

I enclose copies of messages to the Prime Minister from:

Chancellor Kohl
President Babangida of Nigeria
The Taoiseach
The Prime Minister of Norway

I should be grateful for draft replies to these messages
in due course.

CHARLES POWELL

Robert Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

116

Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

DER BOTSCHAFTER

DER BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND

Baron Hans von Stein

07 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

I have the honour to transmit to you the enclosed message of condolence from Herr Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

A courtesy translation is attached.

I am, Dear Prime Minister,

Yours sincerely
Hans von Stein

Her Excellency

The Rt.Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP

Her Majesty's Prime Minister and

First Lord of the Treasury

No 10 Downing Street

L o n d o n

T e l e g r a m m

von Herrn Helmut Kohl
Bundeskanzler der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

an

Ihre Exzellenz
Frau Margaret Thatcher
Premierminister des
Vereinigten Königreichs
Grossbritannien und Nordirland

Sehr geehrte Frau Premierminister, liebe Margaret,

tief erschüttert habe ich von dem schweren Unglück
einer britischen Kanalfähre vor Zeebrügge erfahren.

Zum tragischen Tod zahlreicher Passagiere, darunter
besonders vieler britischer Staatsangehöriger, möchte
ich Ihnen mein tief empfundenenes Beileid aussprechen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Helmut Kohl
Bundeskanzler der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

T e l e g r a m

from Herr Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

to

Her Excellency
The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Dear Prime Minister, dear Margaret,

I was profoundly shocked to learn of the grave
Chanel ferry accident near Zeebrugge.

I should like to express my deep condolences on
the tragic death of the many British passengers.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NIGERIA



TELEPHONE: 01-839 1244

9 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE
LONDON WC2N 5BX

Ref.No.Ba.219/C

7 March 1987

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street

Dear Prime Minister

I have the honour to transmit the attached message of condolence to you from President Babangida, on the accident outside Zeebrugge harbour involving the Herald of Free Enterprise.

*Yours sincerely,
G. Dove-Edwin*

(G. DOVE-EDWIN)

Enc.



TEXT OF MESSAGE

FOR

THE RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.

FROM

PRESIDENT IBRAHIM B. BABANGIDA, C.F.R., fss, mni

I WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN LATE LAST NIGHT OF THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT INVOLVING A BRITISH FERRY-BOAT IN BELGIAN WATERS AND IN WHICH A LARGE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS MAY HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES.

WE FEEL DEEPLY FOR THE BRITISH PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR DEAR ONES IN THE ACCIDENT AND TRUST THAT THE INJURED WILL SOON RECOVER FROM THEIR MOST HARROWING ORDEAL. PLEASE ACCEPT MY PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND THAT OF THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE ON THIS TRAGIC ACCIDENT.

MAY I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO YOU, DEAR PRIME MINISTER, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST ESTEEM.

7th March 1987



10 DOWNING STREET

Message from the Taoiseach 7.3.87
(via Cabinet office)

To the Prime Minister -

" I wish to convey to you, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Irish Government and people, the profound shock with which we learned of the tragedy yesterday at Zeebrugge. We extend our deepest sympathy to all those bereaved and injured in this tragedy and to their families.

The Taoiseach.

Conveyed by Richard Townsend,
Irish Ist. Secretary.

(Tel. 866 0303)

3 N° 10
1 FILE

M

27582 CABOFF G
72400Y FOTEX N

PHONOTELEX SERVICE

OSLO NORWAY MARCH 7TH 1987 1639HRS STIT/MYTO NO.429

TLX 27582 CABOFF G
ENGLAND

RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER FRS, MP
HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S PRIME MINISTER
LONDON

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

PLEASE ACCEPT MY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY ON THE APPALLING CATASTROPHE
WHICH HAS STRUCK THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRICE, CAUSING THE
TRAGIC DEATH OF SO MANY PEOPLE.

THE NORWEGIAN PEOPLE GRIEVE WITH YOU AND WITH THE FAMILIES AND
RELATIVES OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES.

SINCERELY YOURS
GRD HARLEM BRUNDTLAND
PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

27582 CABOFF G
72400Y FOTEX N

E. R.

All messages
to below to be
'T'd.

PRIME MINISTER

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

You may like to see the attached letters of condolence
from other Heads of State and Government, so far received.

Very nice letters

mt

CDP

CHARLES POWELL

8 March 1987

cc/PC



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION · LONDON

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (Acting)

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T37/87**

8 March 1987.

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP,
Prime Minister &
First Lord of the Treasury,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

I have been asked to convey to you the following message from the
Australia Prime Minister, Mr Hawke.

Begins

My Dear Prime Minister,

I was distressed to hear the news of the tragic consequences of the
Townsend-Thorensen ferry disaster.

On behalf of the Australian Government and people I wish to convey
my deepest sympathies to all affected.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Hawke.

Ends.

Yours sincerely

A. L. Vincent

A. L. Vincent

SUBJECT
CC MASTER

RESTRICTED



File LB
copy C

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

8 March 1987

From the Private Secretary

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

President Reagan telephoned the Prime Minister yesterday evening to express his own and the American people's sorrow at the sinking of the Herald of Free Enterprise. He understood that most of the passengers were British, many of them young soldiers from the British Rhine Army. He hoped that his sorrow and dismay could be passed on to the families of those involved in the tragedy.

The Prime Minister thanked the President for his thoughtfulness in telephoning. She described her visit to Zeebrugge earlier in the day and the many stories of personal tragedy and grief which she had encountered. It had been a difficult and sad day. But the rescue operation had been highly skilled and effective and the number saved had risen to over 400. The response of the Belgian authorities had been remarkable.

I am copying this letter to Richard Allen (Department of Transport).

CHARLES POWELL

A. C. Galsworthy, Esq., C.M.G.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

RESTRICTED

LB

CONFIDENTIAL



file LB
cc Sir PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

8 March 1987

From the Private Secretary

HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE

Your Secretary of State spoke to the Prime Minister this morning, following their respective visits to Zeebrugge yesterday.

Mr. Moore described the investigations going on into the cause of the accident. He would be speaking this evening to Captain Vale, the Marine Surveyor, to obtain a preliminary report. It would be important not to pre-judge the outcome of an inquiry. But to the layman it seemed evident that, for some reason, the front loading doors of the ship had not been closed properly. There were reports that regulations about the closing of these doors before leaving port had not been regularly observed by cross-channel ferries. The tragedy would be the greater if human error were shown to be the cause of it. But it would be wrong to draw conclusions at this stage.

Mr. Moore reported that there were still difficulties in compiling lists of the names of survivors and of those missing. This was due partly to dispersal of survivors throughout several hospitals in the Zeebrugge area, also to the unfamiliarity of Belgian staff with British names which could lead to tragic misunderstandings. But he hoped that lists would be available later today.

Mr. Moore reported that the Dover District Council had already started a relief fund. The Prime Minister said that the Government should contribute in appropriate measure: there must be no difficulties about this, although equally the company must fulfil its obligations as she was sure it would. Mr. Moore said that he would make a recommendation.

It was agreed that a statement to the House tomorrow would be appropriate.

I am copying this letter to Tony Galsworthy (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Jill Rutter (Chief Secretary's Office, H.M. Treasury), Steven Wood (Lord Privy Seal's Office) and Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office).

CHARLES POWELL

Richard Allen, Esq.,
Department of Transport.

LB

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

MESSAGE DE MONSIEUR FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

PRIME MINISTER'S

PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE

PERSONAL MESSAGE

A

SERIAL No. T36A/87

THE RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER, M. P.

PRIME MINISTER

Paris, le 7 mars 1986

"La France a appris avec émotion et tristesse la nouvelle de la catastrophe qui vient de frapper votre pays.

J'exprime aux familles des victimes les condoléances de mon pays et mes sentiments personnels endeuillés.

Signe : François Mitterrand"./.

MESSAGE DE MONSIEUR JACQUES CHIRAC

PREMIER MINISTRE

A

THE RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER, M. P.

PRIME MINISTER

Paris, le 7 mars 1987

"Chère Madame le Premier Ministre,

J'apprends avec une grande émotion le naufrage d'un car-ferry britannique à l'entrée du port belge de Zeebrugge et la disparition de nombreux passagers.

Je tiens à vous exprimer en mon nom propre et celui de mon Gouvernement, la sympathie et la solidarité de tous les Français devant cette épreuve qui frappe votre Pays.

Je vous prie, Chère Madame le Premier Ministre, d'agréer l'expression de ma haute considération et de mes pensées les plus amicales.

Signé : Jacques Chirac"./. .

Telemesssage

KEC006 LMW2911 PBE0086 P14 3814LOND

08 MAR 1987/1417

Flat 5 53 Wickham Road
Beckenham

*Prime Minister*²

07 March 1987

TELEMESSAGE
PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1

19

mt

SALVATIONISTS EXPRESS PRAYERFUL CONDOLENCE TO FAMILIES BEREAVED IN ZEBRUGGE FERRY DISASTER. BOTH AT THE BELGIUM AND DOVER CENTRES, THE SALVATION ARMY IS SEEKING TO COMFORT AND OFFER PRACTICAL HELP TO THOSE IN DISTRESS ESPECIALLY TO THE BEREAVED. GOD BLESS YOU.

GENERAL EVA BURROWS
SALVATION ARMY

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE

British
TELECOM

**THE
TELEMESSAGE
SERVICE**

- A service of British Telecommunications plc.
- Telemessages received by British Telecom before 10pm (7pm on Sundays) are normally delivered by first class post on the next working day.

**TO SEND A
TELEMESSAGE**

- To dictate your message by telephone simply dial 100 (in London 190) and ask for the Telemessage Service.
- To file by telex, consult your telex book for full details.
- For those special occasions, your Telemessage can be delivered in one of our range of attractive cards. Ask the Telemessage Operator for details.

Telemessage is a registered trade mark of British Telecommunications plc
Registered Office 81 Newgate Street LONDON EC1A 7AJ
Registered in England no. 1800000



South African Embassy

B8/6/1

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T36/87

TO: PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER

FROM: STATE PRESIDENT P W BOTHA

IT WAS WITH DEEP SADNESS THAT I LEARNT OF THE ACCIDENT INVOLVING A BRITISH FERRY IN WHICH SO MANY PASSENGERS TRAGICALLY PERISHED. THE THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS OF BOTH MYSELF AND THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA ARE WITH THE FAMILIES OF THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES OR WERE INJURED.

P W BOTHA

STATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

7 MARCH 1987

Spencer
100%
Ray

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS



PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T35/87

10 DOWNING STREET

Message from the Taoiseach 7-3-87
(via Cabinet office)

To the Prime Minister -

" I wish to convey to you, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Irish Government and people, the profound shock with which we learned of the tragedy yesterday at Zeebrugge. We extend our deepest sympathy to all those bereaved and injured in this tragedy and to their families."

The Taoiseach.

Conveyed by Richard Townsend,
Irish 1st Secretary.

(Tel. 866 0303)

} N° 10
1 FILE

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
OPS

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T34/87**

M
27582 CABOFF G
72400Y FOTEX N

PHONOTELEX SERVICE

OSLO NORWAY MARCH 7TH 1987 1639HRS STIT/MYTO. NO. 429

TLX 27582 CABOFF G
ENGLAND

RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER FRS, MP
HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S PRIME MINISTER
LONDON

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

PLEASE ACCEPT MY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY ON THE APPALLING CATASTROPHE WHICH HAS STRUCK THE HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRICE, CAUSING THE TRAGIC DEATH OF SO MANY PEOPLE.

THE NORWEGIAN PEOPLE GRIEVE WITH YOU AND WITH THE FAMILIES AND RELATIVES OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES.

SINCERELY YOURS
GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND
PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

27582 CABOFF G
72400Y FOTEX N

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NIGERIA



TELEPHONE: 01-839 1244

9 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE
LONDON WC2N 5BX

Ref.No.Ba.219/C

7 March 1987

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street

Dear Prime Minister

I have the honour to transmit the attached message of condolence to you from President Babangida, on the accident outside Zeebrugge harbour involving the Herald of Free Enterprise.

*You nicely,
Babangida*

(G. DOVE-EDWIN)

Enc.

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T33/87

TEXT OF MESSAGE

FOR

THE RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.

FROM

PRESIDENT IBRAHIM B. BABANGIDA, C.F.R., fss, mni

I WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN LATE LAST NIGHT OF THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT INVOLVING A BRITISH FERRY-BOAT IN BELGIAN WATERS AND IN WHICH A LARGE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS MAY HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES.

WE FEEL DEEPLY FOR THE BRITISH PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR DEAR ONES IN THE ACCIDENT AND TRUST THAT THE INJURED WILL SOON RECOVER FROM THEIR MOST HARROWING ORDEAL. PLEASE ACCEPT MY PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND THAT OF THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE ON THIS TRAGIC ACCIDENT.

MAY I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO YOU, DEAR PRIME MINISTER, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST ESTEEM.

7th March 1987

0.10
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
DER BOTSCHAFTER
DER BUNDESREPUBLIK-DEUTSCHLAND

CDT 8/3
CPA

Baron Hans von Stein

07 March 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

I have the honour to transmit to you the enclosed message of condolence from Herr Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

A courtesy translation is attached.

I am, Dear Prime Minister,
Yours sincerely
Hans von Stein

REFLEX SPECIAL REFLEX SPECIAL

Her Excellency
The Rt.Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Her Majesty's Prime Minister and
First Lord of the Treasury
No 10 Downing Street
L o n d o n

T e l e g r a m m

von Herrn Helmut Kohl
Bundeskanzler der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

an

Ihre Exzellenz
Frau Margaret Thatcher
Premierminister des
Vereinigten Königreichs
Grossbritannien und Nordirland

Sehr geehrte Frau Premierminister, liebe Margaret,

tief erschüttert habe ich von dem schweren Unglück
einer britischen Kanalfähre vor Zeebrügge erfahren.

Zum tragischen Tod zahlreicher Passagiere, darunter
besonders vieler britischer Staatsangehöriger, möchte
ich Ihnen mein tief empfundenes Beileid aussprechen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Helmut Kohl
Bundeskanzler der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

7.3.87

SUBJECT

CC MASTER
OPS

T e l e g r a m

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T32/87

from Herr Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

to

Her Excellency
The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Dear Prime Minister, dear Margaret,

I was profoundly shocked to learn of the grave
Chanel ferry accident near Zeebrugge.

I should like to express my deep condolences on
the tragic death of the many British passengers.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

The Prime Minister has been following the situation closely during the night and early this morning with deep anxiety. Like everyone, she is devastated at the extent of the tragedy. She is in touch with the Transport Secretary who will shortly be flying to the scene of the accident and who will later give her a first hand report. She is very grateful for the tremendous work being done by the emergency and rescue services of all the countries involved, and for the care and attention given by the Belgian Government.

[If asked] The Prime Minister is likely to be in touch with the Belgian Government.

[If asked whether the Prime Minister will visit the scene of the accident.] The key consideration is that the rescue should continue unimpeded.

PRIME MINISTER

FERRY TRAGEDY

Prime Minister
I have attached
our statement
CDP

Can I suggest you offer a few words to the press as soon as possible this morning in the Conference Room at No 11. The reason I prefer this to your simply being doorstepped on the way out to the Local Government Conference is:

- 1) The tragedy seems so immense and the rescue operation so praise-worthy that a more formalised gathering seems more appropriate.
- 2) It is freezing cold out in the Street and the press will have been hanging around for a long time.
- 3) Leaders of Opposition parties will be going out of their way to facilitate the media. If we wait until noon, we risk losing lunchtime news.
- 4) If we don't organise something, there will only be disorganised muddle at the Local Government Conference.

I will need about 1 hour from your approval to organise this.

Content?

Christine Wall
DUTY CLERK
PP CHRISTINE WALL
7 8 March 1987

Press Conference approved for 09.30
MS

The Prime Minister has been following the situation closely during the night and early this morning with deep anxiety. Like everyone, she is devastated at the extent of the tragedy. She is in touch with the Transport Secretary who will shortly be flying to the scene of the accident and who will later give her a first hand report. She is very grateful for the tremendous work being done by the emergency and rescue services of all the countries involved, and for the care and attention given by the Belgian Government.

[If asked] The Prime Minister is likely to be in touch with the Belgian Government.

07 MAR 1987/1921

ZCZC DLM2174 MUK799 CTB0502 066710142797

GBXX BY UTFL 075

MIAMI FLO TLX FM NEWYORK NY XO 075/073 07 1306 VIA TRT

7.3

ETATPRIORITE

HER EXCELLENCY THE RT. HON. MARGARET
THATCHER, M.P. PRIME MINISTER OF THE
UK OF G.B. AND N. IRELAND 10 DOWNING ST.
LONDON, S.W.L

MIR1160

7643-03 DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I WAS DEEPLY GRIEVED TO LEARN OF THE HEAVY LOSS OF LIFE
IN THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT THAT BEFELL THE HERALD OF FREE
ENTERPRISE AS IT WAS EN ROUTE TO DOVER LAST EVENING.
PLEASE ACCEPT MY PROFOUND CONDOLENCES.

JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR

JPK 3802 ET

COL 10 MIR1160 7643-03 3802

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions
Telegram

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions
Telegram

for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM
for enquiries dial the number
shown in your dialling instructions

T 1291
Telegram
for enquiries d
shown in your

Telemessager

EB9745 LLX8210 PFC0265 P52 0465LOND

08 MAR 1987/1410

202 North Gower Street
London NW1 2LY

07 March 1987

TELEMESSAGE
MRS THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1

K9/3

Deeply Shocked at Zeebrugge ferry disaster.
Extend our Heartiest Sympathies to all concerned.

Syed Sharif Ahmed
President
UK. Islamic Mission

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE

British
TELECOM

07 March 1987

29/3

TELEMESSAGE
THE RT HON MARGARET THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1

AS I LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY I AM DEEPLY GRIEVED TO HEAR OF THE
DISASTROUS ACCIDENT TO THE TOWNSEND THORESEN FERRY BOAT WHICH HAS
RESULTED IN TRAGIC LOSS OF LIFE.

MAY I EXPRESS TO YOU AND THROUGH YOU TO THE
FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS MY SINCERE CONDOLENCES AND DEEPEST SYMPATHY.

SAAD AL-ABDALLA AL-SABAH
CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER OF KUWAIT

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE



file KB
ohr PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7
6th March 1987

TOWNSEND THORESEN FERRY ACCIDENT

The Prime Minister spoke early this morning to Mr. Martens, the Belgian Prime Minister. She thanked him for everything which the Belgian Government and emergency services were doing to cope with the tragedy. People here had been deeply impressed that the King and Queen of the Belgians had gone to the scene of the accident during the night. She was grateful to Mr Martens personally for having supervised the rescue operation. Everything possible was obviously being done.

The Prime Minister said that she would very much like to come over to Belgium later today or tomorrow if that would not interfere with the rescue operations. Mr Martens said that he would very much welcome that, would want to see the Prime Minister himself and would be available at any time during the weekend.

I am putting in hand contingency arrangements for an immediate visit to Brussels.

I am copying this to Richard Allan (Department of Transport).

C D POWELL

The Resident Clerk,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CDP
12/13

PRIME MINISTER

I attach for the press conference the text of the statement we have put out in your name. We hope that by the time of the press conference you will have been able to speak to Mr Martens, the Belgian Prime Minister. You will not want to commit yourself definitely to going over to Belgium, if only for reasons of security. I suggest that you say that obviously the first concern must be with the conduct of the rescue operation and you obviously do not want to do anything which would distract anyone from that. You will be receiving a first hand report from Mr Moore and he will keep you in constant touch with the situation.

You will wish to say that Captain Vale, one of the Department of Transport's marine servicers, went to the scene of the accident during the night to start a preliminary investigation. Captain Harris, Head of the Coast Guard, is flying out with Mr Moore to continue investigations.

You will want to stress your gratitude for the magnificent work being done by the rescue services and for the tremendous concern shown by their Majesties the King and Queen of the Belgians, and by the Belgian Government and local authorities.

C.D.P.

C D POWELL

6 March 1987

You will want to say that you have spoken to Mr Martens to express your gratitude for the efficiency of the Belgian services and for all that is being done.

You can also say that there will
be a public inquiry.

B R

The Prime Minister has been following the situation closely during the night and early this morning with deep anxiety. Like everyone, she is devastated at the extent of the tragedy. She is in touch with the Transport Secretary who will shortly be flying to the scene of the accident and who will later give her a first hand report. She is very grateful for the tremendous work being done by the emergency and rescue services of all the countries involved, and for the care and attention given by the Belgian Government.

[If asked] The Prime Minister is likely to be in touch with the Belgian Government.

[If asked whether the Prime Minister will visit the scene of the accident.] The key consideration is that the rescue should continue unimpeded.

Grey Scale #13



A 1 2 3 4 5 6 **M** 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 **B** 17 18 19

