

MT

Confidential File

THAMES RIVER BOAT DISASTER

DISASTERS

August 1988

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
20.8.89							
21.8.89							
24.8.89							
29.8.89							
4.9.89							
5.9.89							
17.12.91							
3.7.92							
PREM				19/3658			

Marchioness

Subject to AT's response
to my note on Ting
I have not TD any
of the sympathy
messages. Add any
new ones to the
list which we'll
get typed up when
~~these~~ they're all
in. Even we can
tone nicely written
one + one stock
response for the
Pul's collection.

Shaw 26/8

LIST OF CONDOLENCES RECEIVED ON THE OCCASION
OF THE THAMES RIVER BOAT TRAGEDY (THE
MARCHIONESS) AUGUST 20th 1989

PM Bob Hawke (Australia)
Pres Mitterand (France)
Amb Zhulev (Bulgaria)
PM Gonzalez Torquez (Spain)
Jacques Delors (EC)
Chancellor Kohl (FRG)
General Secretary Konecker (GDR)
Chancellor Vranitsky (Austria)
President Babangida (Nigeria)
The Taoiseach (Ire)
President Banda (Malawi)
President Sydenha (Rwanda)
Prime Minister Palmer (New Zealand)
Pres. Gorbachev (USSR)
PM Nemeth (Hungary)
Pres Kaunda (Zambia)
PM Atanassov (Bulgaria)



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

POLICY - IN CONFIDENCE

3 July 1992

Dear Secretary of State

REPORT OF THE HAYES' ENQUIRY INTO RIVER SAFETY

Thank you for your letter of ~~29~~ June about the Hayes Enquiry into River Safety.

I support the general lines of the draft statement and response, including the rejection of the recommendation that there should be an early review of the rescue arrangements and equipment on the Thames by an independent person. The relevant authorities in London and those with similar interests elsewhere have had over two years to absorb the lessons which can always be learnt from an incident as serious as this, and contingency plans have been adjusted accordingly. New and accurate information arising from the Marchioness/Bowbelle disaster is unlikely to emerge so long after the event.

I am, however, writing to the main agencies involved to confirm that appropriate action has been taken in respect of the Thames over the past two years. Initial indications are that much has been done, including reviews of the provision of lifesaving equipment, the revision of contingency plans and the exercising of the main river disaster plan, POLACAP. A further exercise is planned for September. If my enquiries do throw up the need for any follow-up action I will ensure that this is taken, but I am quite clear that a further independent enquiry is unnecessary.

I also believe that Recommendation 8 is given an unnecessary degree of prominence in a response to a total of 22 recommendations. I should prefer to see the two paragraphs in the draft Written Answer replaced by a single paragraph as follows:

"Mr Hayes recommended that there should be an early review of the rescue arrangements and equipment on the Thames. The Government has given careful consideration to the recommendation but has concluded that a further review of this kind would not be justified. Action is, however, being taken to ensure that the lessons from the Marchioness/Bowbelle disaster have been fully assimilated. In addition, Thames rescue arrangements and equipment will also be examined by the relevant district marine safety committee as part of its wider review."

These changes would require corresponding changes to the Statement, as follows:

"The Government has given careful consideration to this recommendation but has concluded that a further review of this kind would not be justified. Action is, however, being taken to ensure that the lessons learned from the Marchioness/Bowbelle disaster have been fully assimilated.

- the Home Office is asking the main parties involved in rescue to confirm they have drawn the appropriate lessons over the last two years; that their contingency plans have been amended accordingly; and that those plans are regularly reviewed and practised.

The Rt Hon John MacGregor, MP.
Secretary of State for Transport
2 Marsham Street
LONDON, S.W.1.

/cont....

POLICY - IN CONFIDENCE

3.

- Thames rescue arrangements and equipment will be examined by the relevant district marine safety committee (see response to Recommendation 1) as part of its wider review of risks, responsibilities, arrangements and scope for improvements in its area."

I am content with the proposed responses to Recommendations 21 and 22.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of EDH, the Attorney General and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours Sincerely

by - Hellmuth

APPROVED BY THE HOME SECRETARY
AND SIGNED IN HIS ABSENCE

R4/7

With the Compliments of

*The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers
Attorney General's Chambers
9 Buckingham Gate
London SW1E 6JP*

071-828



071-828 1884

9 BUCKINGHAM GATE
LONDON SW1E 6JP

nbm

The Rt Hon John MacGreggor
Secretary of State for Transport
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3EB

2nd July, 1992

Dear John,

REPORT OF THE HAYES ENQUIRY INTO RIVER SAFETY

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 29th June enclosing your draft answer to the House of Commons together with the draft response to the recommendations of the Hayes Report.

My main concern relates to recommendation 22 on which the response proposes to publish a consultation paper without commitment. I am content with what you propose overall.

Copies of this letter go to the **Prime Minister**, Members of EDH and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever

Nick.

CONFIDENTIAL

scs



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref:

Your ref:

Barry Potter Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

17 DEC 1991

Prime Minister

②

*To note. The announcement
tomorrow will (announcemnt)
get lost.*

BHP



Dear Barry,

INQUIRY INTO RIVER VESSEL SAFETY

I am writing to let you know that my Secretary of State is proposing to hold an independent private inquiry into the Department's handling of river vessel safety in the light of the Bowbelle/Marchioness disaster of 20 August 1989. The Marine Accident Investigation Branch reported on the disaster in June last year, and criticised, inter alia, the Department's approach to safety of operations.

The inquiry would concentrate on the Department's handling of the responsibility for the safety of vessels since 1980 and would report to the Secretary of State. The expectation is that the report would be published. I attach draft terms of reference.

It is clear that we will need a strong, independent Chairman for the inquiry. John Hayes, Secretary General of the Law Society (and a former local authority chief executive) has agreed to be the Chairman. He will be supported by an expert assessor.

We think we will be ready to make the announcement (by way of a written PQ) on Thursday of this week. This could attract some Parliamentary interest since Mr Prescott has been pressing for a public inquiry in support of the Marchioness relatives over the last two years.

I am copying this letter to Tim Sutton, Nicholas Holgate, Murdo MacLean and Sonia Phippard.

*Love,
S C Whiteley*

S C WHITELEY
Private Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL

AN INQUIRY INTO RIVER VESSEL SAFETY

Draft terms of reference

In the light of the Bowbelle/Marchioness disaster, to examine the handling since 1980 by the Department of Transport of its responsibility for the safety of vessels on rivers and inland waters and to report on the effectiveness of the present approach. The Inquiry should take account of developments in the field of marine safety at the international level.



10 DOWNING STREET

Note for file

Spoke to ~~Earl~~ The Lord
Edwards. He now accepts why
Pm cannot attend & is expecting
a call from A/Lord Pres. &

Am

● Prime Ministers

The Marchioness Henrietta Sarsfield.

You asked me to investigate possibility that Mr Parkinson should attend, allowing you to make a prompt departure for Japan. (The difference would be that you would arrive before lunch rather than after, allowing you to bracket yourself for the official engagements.)

Mr Parkinson would be out of the country but the Lord President could represent the Government.

Contact? Yes not

The Queen will be represented by a Lord in Waiting as Lord Bramhall is away, and the Princess of Wales will attend in a personal capacity. Thus with Lord President attending both Royal Family and Government would be well represented.

BT

10/9

not



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 September 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Daltrey

His Excellency Mr. Georgi Atanassov

KK

cc FCO
DOE

tw



KK
cc Fco
DOE

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 September 1989

Dear Mr. President

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda

tw

~~Mr. D. Morris~~

Range the
protest to
pass or
Amade info
AD

To note. 8/9

MR. THATCHER

REC6
5/9

The Memorial Service for the victims of the Marchioness pleasure boat disaster will be held in Southwark Cathedral at noon on Monday 18 September. Although the Prime Minister departs for Tokyo later that afternoon, she has said she wishes to attend the Memorial Service.

If you are free, would you wish to accompany her?

Regret Not free

DM →

D 5/9

Dominic Morris

4 September 1989

Protest

David Edwards

407 3708

928 6414

File

089

DETECTIVES

cc: Mr. Perks

The Prime Minister has agreed to attend the Memorial Service for the victims of the Marchioness disaster. It will be at Southwark Cathedral at noon on Monday 18 September. (I am checking whether Mr. Thatcher wishes to go too.)

The contact at Southwark Cathedral is the Provost, the Very Reverend David Edwards (telephone: 01-407 3708), to whom I have already given the usual security warning.

Dominic Morris

4 September 1989

→ GR
at flap
May I have the Provost's
letter pl?
DM

PRIME MINISTER /

The Provost of Southwark Cathedral has let us know that the Memorial Service for the victims of the Thames pleasure boat disaster will be held in Southwark Cathedral at noon on Monday, 18 September. The Queen is being represented by the Lord Lieutenant. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Hume are both expected to officiate.

We will not know until next week whether your meeting with Mr. Gorbachev will take place on the way out or the way back from Tokyo. If it takes place on the way out, you will have to leave on the Sunday.

Yes
ms

In that case, content in principle that Sir Geoffrey Howe represent the Government (he is free)? Cecil Parkinson, a natural choice, is out of the country with his wife on the Monday.

If we stick to your current Tokyo timetable, your plane would leave mid afternoon on the Monday. It would be a scramble, but you could attend the Service. In these circumstances, would you wish to attend? Yes ms

or

be represented by Sir Geoffrey?

DM

31 August, 1989.

S O U T H W A R K C A T H E D R A L

MONTAGUE CLOSE, LONDON SE1 9DA

TELEPHONE: 01-407 3708

Office

928 6414 home

13/8.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1.

30th August 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

It will shortly be announced that Southwark Cathedral has been asked to arrange a Memorial Service at 12 noon on Monday, September 18th. We are inviting the families bereaved by the recent tragedy in the Thames (a short distance from the Cathedral), together with the survivors and representatives of the Emergency Services and the River Services. Her Majesty the Queen will be represented by the Lord Lieutenant. The Archbishop of Canterbury will preach, Cardinal Hume will say prayers, and the Bishop of Southwark will dedicate a permanent memorial.

I appreciate that other commitments may well make it impossible, but I should be very glad to hear by September 8th if you wish to be present, or to be represented, so that we may make special arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

David L. Edwards

David L. Edwards
Provost

*Standard
copy of
R*

Bulgarian Embassy,
186/188 Queen's Gate,
London SW7 5HL.

20.3.79

Translation from Bulgarian

The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, PC, FRS, MP,
Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and
Minister for the Civil Service of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1A 2AA.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my deepest sympathy for the
victims following the sinking of the "Marchioness" on The
Thames.

Georgi Atanassov,
Chairman of the Council of Ministers,
People's Republic of Bulgaria

KA-1A2T



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

cc FCO

THE PRIME MINISTER

29 August 1989

Your Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Rajiv Gandhi

His Excellency Mr. Turgut Ozal

VLB



CC FCO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 August 1989

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families, and may I ask you in turn to convey my condolences to the families of the Australian victims in this time of sorrow.

Kind regards

Yours ever

Rogers

The Hon. R. J. L. Hawke, A.C., M.P.

MB



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

SH
CC FCO + letter

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 August 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Shaker

His Excellency Mr. Miklos Nemeth

VCS



SH

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

cc FCO → letter

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 August 1989

Your Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Palmer, M.P.

VLS



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

CC FCO

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 August 1989

Dear President Gorbachev.

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

President Mikhail Gorbachev

VLS

2



Prime Minister

THAMES RIVER BOAT DISASTER

1. I have seen the letter from your private secretary dated 20 August about the loss of the MV Marchioness and I think I should now bring you up-to-date on the action we and others have taken so far.

2. You may have seen that on Monday, before the charter boat operators resumed business, I asked them to introduce new measures to improve passenger safety. Since noon on Tuesday they have been leaving ashore a record of the number of passengers being carried on each voyage. The crews are also giving information to passengers before departure on what to do in an emergency.

3. These two changes are being made on a voluntary basis for the moment, but I have told the operators that I shall make them mandatory, by regulation, in due course. I am considering urgently how these new requirements might also be applied to scheduled passenger services: the difficulty here of course is that passenger numbers fluctuate during the journey. My officials have already had preliminary discussions with the operators and I intend to meet their representatives shortly.

4. We are tightening up the procedures to ensure that all other regulations are adhered to. A team of six of my own surveyors has begun carrying out a programme of random inspections in addition to the statutory annual surveys. These will cover all passenger vessels on the Thames within 14 days with priority to the tidal reaches. Additional



inspections of passenger vessels in other parts of the country have also been put in hand. The Port of London Authority have agreed to step up their routine patrols: they will now operate on a 24-hour basis.

5. Also, Sir Brian Kellett, Chairman of the PLA, is convening a meeting of representatives of all river users and has helpfully invited the Department's Surveyor-General to be represented at the meeting. That meeting will take place early next week.

6. Meanwhile, as you know, the accident is the subject of three investigations, by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, by the PLA, and by the Police. I am ready to implement any recommendations which emerge during the course of these inquiries, without necessarily waiting for the final report.

7. I am sending copies of this minute to Geoffrey Howe, Douglas Hurd, Tom King, Chris Patten, Norman Lamont, Patrick Mayhew, David Waddington, and to Sir Robin Butler.

CECIL PARKINSON

24 August 1989

DISASTERS : Thomas Line Boat 89





10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency General Gnassingbe Eyadema



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Walker

His Excellency Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, G.C.B.

dr



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Ibrahim,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Ronald
—

His Excellency General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida CFR

ls



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Charles,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Dr. Franz Vranitzky



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Your General Secretary

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Herr Erich Honecker

lv

cc. FCO

file



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Helmut,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours ever
Margaret

His Excellency Dr. Helmut Kohl

6

cc - FCO file



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Monsieur Delors,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Roger Maitland

Monsieur Jacques Delors

6

cc- F Co Joke



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August, 1989.

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Senor Don Felipe Gonzalez Marquez

h



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 August 1989

Dear Ambassador

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Roger M. Jackson

His Excellency Mr. Dimitar Zhulev

File DSG/CAM

afw

M

~~add~~ Finis add suggest: - an

We have a source: but

in view of the fact that
some of the dead were

Australians, which he mentions,

we ought perhaps to

add a sentence or two?

JH/8



DS2ATI

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 August 1989

STOCK

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families, and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

at may I ask you in turn to including convey my ~~best~~ cordial condolences to the families of the Australian victims in ~~the~~ this time of sorrow.

Ours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Monsieur le Président Mitterrand, G.C.B.

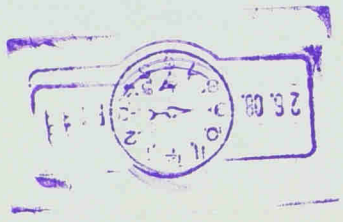
KE

The Right Honourable
Margaret Thatcher M.P.
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

I have been distressed by the sad news of the recent disaster on the Thames, which has caused the loss of so many lives.

I would like to extend to you and to the bereaved families of the victims, my deepest sympathy and condolences.

Turgut Ozal
Prime Minister of the
Republic of Turkey



cefeo

*SA
Mrs. M.*

Unofficial translation

The Right Honourable
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of Great Britain

Please, accept deep condolences in connection with numerous human losses as a result of the catastrophe on the Thames.

Please, convey our sincere sympathy to the relatives of the bereaved.

M. Gorbachev

August 23, 1989

Ее Превосходительству
Премьер-министру Великобритании
Маргарет Тэтчер

Примите глубокие соболезнования в связи с многочисленными человеческими жертвами в результате катастрофы на Темзе.

Прошу передать наше искреннее сочувствие родным и близким погибших.

М. Горбачев



1972 1000 000
1000 000 000
1000 000 000

2300 000
1000 000
1000 000



FILE DAS

cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 August 1989

Dear Mr. President.

Thank you for your message of sympathy on the terrible tragedy of the sinking of the Marchioness. It is all the more dreadful that this accident should have befallen friends who were celebrating a young man's birthday and that so many young lives should have been lost. I shall ensure that your kind words are passed on to their families and I know that your sympathy will bring comfort to them at this tragic time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Monsieur le Président Mitterrand, G.C.B.

KIC



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

R2318
AUSTRALIA HOUSE
STRAND
LONDON WC2B 4LA
01-438

23 August 1989

Mr C.D. Powell
(Overseas Affairs)
Prime Minister's Office
No. 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

Dear Madam,

In the absence of the High Commissioner from London at the moment, I write to convey to the Prime Minister through you the attached message of condolence from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, concerning the recent Thames disaster.

Yours sincerely,
D. W. Evans
(D.W. Evans)
Deputy High Commissioner



Text of letter from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, to Mrs Thatcher.

23 August 1989

The Rt Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
No. 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

My dear Margaret,

On behalf of all Australians I wish to pass to you my heartfelt condolences on the many deaths which resulted from the sinking in the Thames of the 'Marchioness'.

The fact that some of the dead were Australians adds to the sorrow that we share with you over this tragedy.

My sympathy goes out particularly to the relatives and friends of those who died.

Yours sincerely

Bob Hawke

TURKISH EMBASSY

1075/8-153-89

Stock

ccpc

43, BELGRAVE SQUARE
LONDON, SW1X 8PA
Tel. No. 01-235 5252

Mr Hammond, APS

M. Hammon

We spoke.

Action please.

Vic Henderson
SFED 25/8

25/8

The Turkish Embassy present their compliments to Foreign and Commonwealth Office and kindly request that the enclosed message from His Excellency Mr. Turgut Özal, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey to the Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland be forwarded to its high destination.

The Turkish Embassy avail themselves of this opportunity to renew to Foreign and Commonwealth Office the assurance of their highest consideration.



London, 21 August 1989

Foreign and Commonwealth
Office
London SW1



New Zealand High Commission

New Zealand House
Haymarket
London SW1Y 4TQ
Telephone 01-930 8422
Telex 24368
Facsimile No. 01-839 4580

Reference:

22 August 1989

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher FRS MP
Prime Minister and
First Lord of the Treasury
10 Downing Street
WHITEHALL

Dear Prime Minister

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Rt Hon Geoffrey Palmer MP, has asked me to pass on to you the following message:

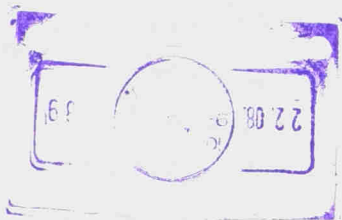
"I was saddened to hear of the tragic loss of life in the Thames boating disaster. My thoughts and those of the Government and people of New Zealand are with you and the bereaved families and friends at this time."

May I add my own deep sympathy.

Yours sincerely

Bryce Harland

(Bryce Harland)
High Commissioner



AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN.



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

17 Grosvenor Place

SW1X 7HR

22 August 1989

Mr Charles D Powell
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Private Secretary

I am enclosing text of a message to the Prime Minister,
The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP FRS from An Taoiseach,
Mr Charles J Haughey TD.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention
of the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely

Sean Farrell

Sean Farrell
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

Enc

010

CCPC
CCFO

*Conf pl
dead*



MESSAGE TO THE RT HON MRS MARGARET THATCHER MP, PRIME MINISTER FROM
AN TAOISEACH, MR CHARLES J HAUGHEY TD

I have learned with deep sorrow of the tragic loss of life
following the marine accident on the Thames early on Sunday
morning.

On my own behalf and on behalf of my colleagues in Government I
extend my deepest sympathy to the families of the bereaved.



80
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NIGERIA



TELEPHONE: 01-839 1244

9 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE
LONDON WC2N 5BX

22 August 1989

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

gr
Pideal

Dear Prime Minister

President Babangida has instructed me to submit the enclosed message from him to you.

May I, Prime Minister, add the humble condolences of this High Commission.

Yours very sincerely,
George Dove-Edwin

(G. DOVE-EDWIN)
High Commissioner

Enc



TEXT OF MESSAGE

FOR

THE RT HON MARGARET THATCHER, MP

PRIME MINISTER

FROM

GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA

PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES

DEAR MARGARET,

I WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN OF ANOTHER TRANSPORT TRAGEDY IN WHICH SO MANY YOUNG, PROMISING BRITISH LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST, AND ON MY RETURN TO LAGOS I WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY TO YOU AND TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE SINCERE FEELINGS OF SADNESS WHICH MARYAM AND I FEEL.

I ASK YOU TOO TO PLEASE ACCEPT THE CONDOLENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF NIGERIA.

YOURS VERY SINCERELY,

IBRAHIM





EMBASSY OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The Chargé d' Affaires a.i.

London, 22nd August 1989

Madam,

I have the honour to forward to you on behalf of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, the following message:

Premierministerin
des Vereinigten Königreiches von
Großbritannien und Nordirland
Ihre Exzellenz
Frau Margaret Thatcher

LONDON
10, Downing Street

Zu dem tragischen Schiffsunglück auf der Themse versichere ich Sie meiner tiefempfundenen Anteilnahme und bitte Sie, den Angehörigen der Opfer des Unglücks mein aufrichtiges Beileid zu übermitteln.

Erich Honecker

Generalsekretär des Zentral-
komitees der Sozialistischen
Einheitspartei Deutschlands
Vorsitzender des Staatsrates
der Deutschen Demokratischen
Republik

Unofficial translation

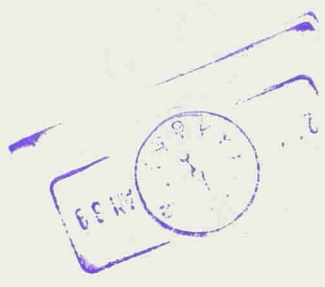
H. E. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
10, Downing Street
LONDON

On the sad occasion of the tragic boat accident on the Thames I assure you of my deepest sympathy and request you to convey my sincere condolences to the bereaved families.

Erich Honecker

General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Socialist Unity Party
of Germany
and Chairman of the Council of State
of the German Democratic Republic





May I take the opportunity to convey to you and
the relatives of the casualties also my sincere condolences.

Reichel

Reichel

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland
10 Downing Street
LONDON

GR
R. dear.

CC PC
✓ FCO

DER BOTSCHAFTER
DER BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND

London, 22.08.1989

Baron Hermann von Richthofen

NO

~~Charles~~ - the PM has
replied to the Chancellor,
but do you want to
send any further note in
reply to ~~the~~?

Dear Prime Minister,

CAS

23/8

Please find enclosed a message of condolence
from Herr Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal
Republic of Germany concerning the tragic accident
to the Thames Cruiser Marchioness on 20 August.

I wish to express to you, dear Prime Minister,
my deepest sympathy.

Yours sincerely

Hermann Richthofen

The Rt.Hon. Margaret Thatcher QC MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA



Courtesy Translation

TELEGRAMME

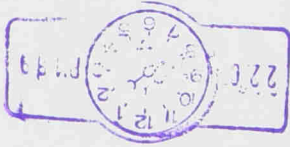
Prime Minister,

dear Margaret,

I send sincere condolences on the loss of so many
lives in the boat disaster on the Thames on 20
August.

Please convey my heartfelt sympathy to the families
of the dead and to the injured.

Helmut Kohl
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany



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T E L E G R A M M

Sehr geehrte Frau Premierminister,

liebe Margaret,

zu dem schweren Schiffsunglück auf der Themse, bei dem am 20. August d.J. zahlreiche Menschen in den Tod gerissen wurden, spreche ich Ihnen mein tiefempfundenes Beileid aus.

Ich möchte Sie bitten, den Angehörigen der Verstorbenen und den Verletzten meine herzliche Anteilnahme zu übermitteln.

Ihr

Helmut Kohl
Bundeskanzler der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

NNNN

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10 DOWNING ST
SW1

21 AUG 1989/1240

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MADRID (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO)

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EXCMA SRA MARGARET THATCHER
PRIMERA MINISTRA DEL REINO UNIDO
DE GRAN BRETANA E IRLANDA DEL NORTE
LONDRES

ME HA IMPRESIONADO PROFUNDAMENTE LA NOTICIA DEL TRAGICO ACCIDENTE
DEL BARCO-DISCOTECA 'MARCHIONESS' EN EL RIO TAMESIS DESEO HACERLE
LLEGAR MIS SENTIMIENTOS DE HONDO PESAR QUE RUEGO HAGA LLEGAR
A LOS FAMILIARES DE LAS VICTIMAS ASI COMO MI DESEO DE UNA PRONTA
RECUPERACION DE LOS HERIDOS
FELIPE PXX GONZALEZ MARQUEZ
PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO ESPANOL

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Bulgarian Embassy,
186/188 Queen's Gate,
London SW7 5HL.

R23/8

21 August 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

My Staff and I are shocked and saddened with the tragedy of the sinking of the "Marchioness" on Sunday, the 20th of this month, which took so many victims.

Our grief is even deeper because that boat sank the hopes of successful self-realisation and bright future of so many young people and their families.

Please accept, dear Prime Minister, our deepest sympathy and condolences and convey these to the families of the perished.

yours sincerely,

Dimitar Zhulev,
Ambassador

The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, PC,FRS,MP,
Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and
Minister for the Civil Service of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1A 2AA.

020
n° 1685-20

cc FCO

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
LONDRES

21st August, 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

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

I enclose it herewith.

Yours faithfully,



Patrick Villemur
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

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

MESSAGE DE MONSIEUR FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE

A

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

PRIME MINISTER

Paris, le 21 août 1989

"Je tiens à vous exprimer, en mon nom personnel et au nom du peuple français, mes pensées très émues pour les victimes de la tragédie du bateau-mouche "Marchioness".

Je vous prie de transmettre mes plus vives condoléances aux familles frappées par ce drame.

Signé : François Mitterrand"../.

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3235 UKREP SI
297711 PRDRME G
5201 PREREP TG
ETAT PRIORITE

PRESTREPUBLITOGO LOME

A

SON EXCELLENCE
MADAME MARGARET THATCHER
PREMIER MINISTRE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE

LONDRES

NO. 530/89/T/PR.-

MADAME LE PREMIER MINISTRE,

C'EST AVEC INFINIMENT DE PEINE QUE J'AI APPRIS LA TRISTE NOUVELLE DE LA MORT DE PLUSIEURS DIZAINES DE PERSONNES A LA SUITE DU NAUFRAGE DU BATEAU MOUCHE DISCOTHEQUE "MARCHIONESS" LE 20 AOUT DERNIER SUR LA TAMISE.

DANS CES CIRCONSTANCES DE VIVE DOULEUR, JE VOUDRAIS, AU NOM DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS, DE SON PARTI D'UNION NATIONALE, LE "RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS", AU NOM DE MON GOUVERNEMENT ET EN MON NOM PERSONNEL, VOUS ADRESSER NOS CONDOLEANCES LES PLUS SINCERES QUE JE VOUS PRIE DE BIEN VOULOIR TRANSMETTRE AUX FAMILLES EPLOREES.

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.

TRIS LE 21/08/89 A 17H45

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5201 PREREP TGMMM

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PS/No 10

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT



PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

URGENT

TO DOMINIC MORRIS

I attach a copy of
the final version of
today's statement
by the Secretary
of State.

Katherine Orwell
APS/S of S

21-8-89

366

21 August 1989

Prime Minister 2
Full text of statement
which Cecil Parkinson
wired this afternoon
DM

MARCHIONESS SINKING: STATEMENT BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, CECIL PARKINSON

It is too early to draw any conclusions about the causes of the Marchioness accident, but there are two measures to improve passenger safety on Thames vessels which I intend to take immediately.

Masters are already required to count the number of passengers to ensure that a vessel complies with the terms of my Department's Passenger Certificate. I now intend to require that passenger numbers for all charter vessels should be recorded before sailing. A record of the number of passengers aboard is to be left ashore.

All passenger vessels have to be equipped with satisfactory emergency equipment. My Department has already issued a notice recommending that passengers should be provided with information about the action to be taken in an emergency. I intend to make this requirement mandatory for charter vessels but I shall expect operators to apply it immediately on a voluntary basis. I shall also be discussing urgently with the operators of scheduled passenger services on the Thames what system they might introduce to ensure that passenger numbers on their vessels are known and recorded, and that passengers are instructed on the action to be taken in an emergency.

An investigation by the Department's Marine Accidents Investigation Branch is already under way. If, in the course of that investigation, it emerges that further measures to improve river safety should be taken, I shall not hesitate to put them into effect.

In the meantime existing regulations will be rigorously enforced. Operators of passenger vessels on the River Thames can now expect frequent random inspections, between annual surveys, by my Department's surveyors. The Port of London Authority will increase their river patrols, to ensure that all regulations are complied with. I have requested the PLA, and they have agreed, to convene a special meeting of the group representing all river users to consider whether any further measures should be taken at this stage.

I expect all operators to implement the changes I have outlined as soon as possible and not later than noon tomorrow (22 August).

Press Enquiries: 01-276 0888	Out of Hours: 01-276 5999
Public Enquiries: 01-276 3000	ask for Public Enquiry Unit

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT



PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 August, 1989.

Dear Mr. Dellow,

I am very grateful to you for having arranged to give me such a full briefing at short notice today on the tragedy of the sinking of the Thames pleasure cruiser, and for making the launch available: it is always much more informative to see things at first hand. I should be grateful if you would pass on my particular thanks to Commander Speed and Inspector Hetherington for the part they played in this afternoon's briefing. I know how busy they and all their colleagues have been over the last few hours. They have my full admiration for the efficiency and dedication with which the operation has been conducted.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Stalder

Deputy Commissioner John Dellow, QPM, CBE.

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 August, 1989.

Dear Indira

THAMES RIVER BOAT DISASTER

The Prime Minister, accompanied by your Minister, attended one of the strategy briefing sessions at Scotland Yard this afternoon on the disaster of the sinking of the "Marchioness". The Prime Minister commented that the coordination of the emergency services had been impressive, and thanked them for the effort and efficiency which they had put into the operation.

The Port of London Authority representative reported on the current position of the vessel and said that the bow had turned 180 degrees in the water; it had sustained damage to the port quarter. The salvage vessels would try to pump it out and raise it later this evening. A small part of the superstructure had separated from the hull, but otherwise the vessel appeared to be intact. The priority in the raising operation would be the safety of life, though there was now only a remote possibility that anyone trapped underneath would have survived. The Thames barrier would remain closed until the first attempt to winch the wreck up had been made. If that operation failed, the barrier would be opened to see if the wreck could be floated free and then brought to the north shore. That could not be done until tomorrow morning.

The Prime Minister commented that the emergency services and PLA needed to work out some further contingency plans in case that did not work; she had seen hopes dashed on salvage operations on a number of previous occasions, notably at Zeebrugge. It would be important not to give relatives false hope while trying to raise the vessel as quickly as possible. It was also noted that if the vessel could not be raised by early morning tomorrow, there would be traffic problems in London if Southwark Bridge remained closed.

The Mate and Captain of the dredger vessel "Bowbelle" were currently being interviewed by police at Limehouse. Blood samples had been taken to assess whether any of the crew had been drinking, though it was too early to confirm or refute that suggestion. Contrary to press speculation,

RESTRICTED

none at this stage had been charged; though it was a criminal investigation.

Cannon Row Police Station were dealing with the relatives of those missing. It would be difficult to track down all of them because the organiser of the party on board had given thirty friends a number of tickets for further distribution. Officers from Thames Police and those from Heathrow who had experience of Lockerbie would be on hand at the Westminster Mortuary.

The Casualty Bureau reported that there were 75 recorded survivors (rather than the 89 reported by the media), and still only one known fatality. The Captain of the pleasure boat was among the missing.

The only other two points worth noting were the grateful thanks given by the emergency services to the Ministry of Defence for the offer of assistance by their divers. Although only a small number of divers had been needed, the offer had been greatly appreciated.

It was noted that the one criticism the press had so far made was that there had been an alleged delay in closing the Thames barrier this morning. Whilst one of the salvage ships was downstream of the barrier this morning, it had been possible to open the barrier again to let it through. The Port of London Authority and police commented that there were a variety of operational reasons for the timing of the closure of the barrier; among these being the need for the right volume of water to be upstream of the barrier to enable the salvage vessels to be in position, but without it being so deep that the salvage operation would itself be made more difficult.

On the subject of inquiries, the police were in close cooperation with your MAIB team. Your Minister had already announced that the MAIB would be conducting a full inquiry. It was agreed that it was far too early to say whether there would be any public inquiry. The important thing was to get on with the current inquiry. If any immediate lessons came to light in the next few days they could of course be implemented ahead of the full findings of the inquiry.

I am sending copies of this letter to Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence), Roy Griffins (Department of Transport) and Richard Wilson (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely
Dominic

Dominic Morris

Miss Judith Ritchie,
Mr. Portillo's Office,
Department of Transport.