



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Agree to a low-key, private approach to the South Africans expressing concern about reports of deterioration in Mandela's health & hope that he can

11 September 1985

Dear Charles, have medical attention from his own doctors.

I would rather do this in the context of a broader message

Nelson Mandela

You told me this morning that Bishop Huddleston has sent a message to the Prime Minister expressing his concern at the health of Nelson Mandela.

We have been in touch with our Embassy in Pretoria. They are unable to confirm that Nelson Mandela is suffering from a tumour on the prostate. Press releases from the South African Government have merely said that he was examined by a neurologist in the Capetown Hospital last week and was returned to Pollsmoor Prison over the weekend. The South African Government have indicated that Mandela may seek a second opinion by his family doctor if he so desires. They are also prepared to allow Mrs Mandela an additional visit to her husband.

If the Prime Minister wishes to convey her concern at reports about deterioration in Mandela's health to the South African Government we recommend that our Ambassador should be asked to make an informal approach to the Foreign Minister. This could be done on a confidential basis. Could you let us know if you wish us to instruct the Ambassador accordingly?

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

Peter Ricketts

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street