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CRK

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 June 1985

Dear Charles,

*Prime Minister*  
*Yes - very good idea* Agree this message  
*no* to M. Martens?

Possible Message from the Prime Minister to Mr Martens

*CDP*  
*19/6*

You will have seen Sir Edward Jackson's telegrams numbers 199 and 205 (copies enclosed for ease of reference). Sir Geoffrey Howe thinks it would be helpful if the Prime Minister could send Mr Martens a sympathetic message before they meet at the Milan Council. I enclose a draft telegram.

As you know, the Prime Minister was unable to accept Mr Martens' invitation to her to visit Brussels at the beginning of June to return his visit here on 2 March. Sir Geoffrey Howe did of course visit Brussels on 1 June, as it happened three days after the Brussels football tragedy.

*Yours ever,*  
*Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

# OUT TELEGRAM

	↓	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Precedence/Deskby <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
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ZCZC	1	ZCZC
GRS	2	GRS
CLASS	3	CONFIDENTIAL
CAVEATS	4	
DESKBY	5	
FM FCO	6	FM FCO 181700Z JUN 85
PRE/ADD	7	TO IMMEDIATE BRUSSELS
TEL NO	8	TELEGRAM NUMBER
	9	INFO ROME, PARIS
	10	Your telnos 199 and 205: Message from the Prime Minister to
	11	Mr Martens
	12	1. The Prime Minister would be grateful if you would pass the
	13	following message from her to Mr Martens in the course of your
	14	farewell calls.
	15	Message begins:
	16	Sir Edward Jackson has kept me closely informed of developments in
	17	Belgium after the football tragedy in Brussels on 29 May. As you
	18	know, I share your profound distress at the suffering of the
	19	victims and their families. We are making available an initial
	20	donation of £5,000 to the next of kin of those who lost their
	21	lives.
///	22	2. I am also very conscious of the wider difficulties that the
//	23	tragedy may have caused for you and your colleagues in the
/	24	Belgian government. It seems to me that the best thing we can do
	25	here in Britain is to press ahead with measures to eradicate the

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword  evil
File number	Dept WED	Distribution  Football tragedy limited
Drafted by (Block capitals) C A Munro		
Telephone number 233 4759		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

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1 <<<<

2 evil of violence at football matches. This I am determined to do.  
 3 And of course we shall play our full part in international  
 4 efforts in the Council of Europe and elsewhere to get to grips  
 5 with the problem.

6 I understand that your legal and police authorities are well  
 7 satisfied with the cooperation they are receiving from our people  
 8 in identifying those who may have been involved in unleashing the  
 9 tragedy. But if there is anything further that you think we  
 10 can do, please do not hesitate to get in touch, before our  
 11 meeting in Milan at the end of the month <sup>f</sup>is need be.

12 I am looking forward to our next meeting at Milan. ~~It seems to me~~  
 13 ~~that~~ <sup>T</sup> this meeting of the Council presents us with a major  
 14 opportunity to take substantive decisions to strengthen the unity  
 15 of the Community both externally and internally. <sup>Sir</sup> Geoffrey Howe  
 16 and ~~Leo~~ <sup>T</sup> Tindemans have already discussed our ideas and I believe  
 17 we share a common determination to complete the Common Market, to  
 18 reach formal agreement on political cooperation and improve our  
 19 ability to take decisions as a Community.

20 I look forward to working with you to make the Milan European  
 21 Council a meeting of real achievement.

22 Message ends.

24 HOWE

26 NNNN

31 ///

32 //

33 /

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NNNN ends  
 telegram

BLANK

Catchword

FOOTBALL TRAGEDY

ADVANCE COPIES

45 17



PS

PS/LADY YOUNG

PS/MR RENTON

PS/PUS

MR DEREK THOMAS

MR JENKINS

MR BARRINGTON

MR MACINNES

HD/WED

HD/CONS D

HD/CRD

HD/NEWS D

HD/FINANCE D.

RESIDENT CLERK

PS/NO.10 DOWNING STREET

PS/MR MACFARLANE, DOE

PS/MR SHAW, HOME OFFICE

GRS 350

CONFIDENTIAL

FM BRUSSELS 000147Z JUN 85

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 205 OF 18 JUNE 85

AND TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 191000Z LUXEMBOURG (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

YOUR TELNO 109: FOOTBALL VIOLENCE;  
POSITION OF BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER.

1. I UNDERSTAND FROM YOUR PRIVATE OFFICE THAT YOU ARE ENCOURAGING THE PRIME MINISTER TO CONSIDER SOME KIND OF PERSONAL MESSAGE TO MARTENS. YOU MAY HOWEVER WISH TO KNOW BEFORE YOU SEE TINDEMANS IN LUXEMBOURG THAT HE CONFIRMED PRIVATELY TO ME AT LUNCH YESTERDAY (17 JUNE) THAT MARTENS WAS INDEED RATHER BETTER AT THE COMPLICATIONS WHICH THE HEYSEL TRAGEDY HAD CAUSED FOR THE GOVERNMENT IN THE RUN-UP TO THE ELECTIONS IN DECEMBER, FOLLOWING MARTENS' SUCCESSFUL RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BELGIAN ECONOMY AND HANDLING OF THE CRUISE MISSILES. NOTHOMB ALSO CONFIRMED IT DURING ANOTHER FAREWELL MEAL FOR ME LAST NIGHT TO WHICH HE SAID HE HAD MADE A POINT OF COMING.

2. YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT THE PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT ARISING FROM CRITICISM OF NOTHOMB, WHO IS THE SENIOR FRANCOPHONE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT IN THE COALITION AND SOMEBODY TO WHOM MARTENS IS PERSONALLY VERY WELL DISPOSED, MUST ALREADY BE CAUSING SOME STRAINS IN THE COALITION. TINDEMANS CONSIDERATELY WENT ON TO SAY THAT MARTENS BITTERNESS WAS NOT PERHAPS DIRECTED SOLELY AGAINST THE BRITISH BUT ALSO AGAINST CRAXI'S SHARP REACTIONS AND AGAINST THE WEAKNESSES IN THE BELGIAN PREVENTIVE AND INTERVENTION MEASURES. NEVERTHELESS HIS AND NOTHOMB'S COMMENTS TO ME GAVE ME THE FEELING THAT THE GOVERNMENT...

BRITISH BUT ALSO AGAINST CRAXI'S SHARP REACTIONS AND AGAINST THE WEAKNESSES IN THE BELGIAN PREVENTIVE AND INTERVENTION MEASURES. NEVERTHELESS HIS AND NOTHOMB'S COMMENTS TO ME CONFIRM MY FEELING THAT THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE TRAGEDY HAVE IMPLICATIONS WHICH MAY BE AFFECTING MARTENS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS BRITAIN IN A WIDER SENSE, AND STRENGTHEN THE CASE FOR A CONCILIATORY MESSAGE TO HIM FROM THE PRIME MINISTER, ESPECIALLY IN THE RUN-UP TO MILAN.

3. I HAVE ALSO (A) ASKED TINDEMANS' CABINET TO WARN HIM THAT WE ARE THINKING OF PAYING £5,000 IMMEDIATELY TO FAMILIES OF THE DEAD, IN THE ABSENCE SO FAR OF A DISASTER FUND, AND THAT YOU WISH TO MENTION THIS TO HIM. THE CHEF DE CABINET'S INITIAL PERSONAL REACTION CONFIRMED THAT PAYMENTS TO THE WOUNDED WOULD BE VERY COMPLICATED AND POSSIBLY CONTENTIOUS AND THAT PAYMENTS TO EG POLICE FUNDS WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE (B) REPORTED SEPARATELY A SUGGESTION TO ME LAST NIGHT BY NOTHOMB THAT THE BRITISH MINISTER ATTENDING THE MEETING OF INTERIOR AND JUSTICE MINISTERS IN ROME ON 20-21 JULY SHOULD HAVE INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM AND GOL (MINISTER OF JUSTICE) ABOUT MEANS OF MITIGATING THE PRESENT BELGIAN BAN ON ALL SPORTING TEAMS.

JACKSON

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# CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 570  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM BRUSSELS 140830Z JUN 85  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 199 OF 14 JUN  
INFO PRIORITY ROME AND PARIS

FOOTBALL VIOLENCE - BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS INTERVIEW.

## SUMMARY

1. IN AN INTERVIEW ON 13 JUNE IN LE SOIR (CENTRE) MARTENS DISPLAYS EVIDENT IRRITATION THAT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF HIS GOVERNMENT SINCE 1982 IN RESTORING THE BELGIAN ECONOMY AND 'CEASING TO BE THE SICK MAN OF EUROPE' HAVE BEEN 'TARNISHED' (IN A DIFFICULT ELECTION YEAR FOR HIM) BY THE HEYSEL TRAGEDY. HIS FEELINGS, LIKE THE BELGIAN BAN ON BRITISH TEAMS, ARE UNDERSTANDABLE AND THE PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO CONSIDER SOME PRIVATE GESTURE TO HIM BOTH IN ORDER TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE BILATERAL COOPERATION OVER POST HEYSEL MATTERS AND TO IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF SUPPORT FROM MARTENS FOR OUR OBJECTIVES AT MILAN.

## DETAIL

2. MARTENS FIRST SAID IN HIS PRESS INTERVIEW THAT THERE WAS NOTHING WITH WHICH TO REPROACH ANY BELGIAN AUTHORITIES, BUT WAS THEN PRESSED INTO SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE BELGIAN COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY, THOUGH ITS CONSEQUENCES WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCEPTED. HE REJECTED COMPARISONS BETWEEN HIS ATTITUDE AND MRS THATCHER'S, ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE ORIGINS OF THE TRAGEDY WERE CLEARLY BRITISH.

3. MARTENS IS <sup>NOT</sup> BEING ALTOGETHER UNREASONABLE, THOUGH HE IS PERHAPS UNDULY TIMID AND DEFENSIVE, IN INSISTING THAT HE CANNOT IMMEDIATELY ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY ERRORS BY BELGIAN MINISTERS AND AUTHORITIES (IN THE WAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER COULD SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY IN GENERAL TERMS FOR THE REPREHENSIBLE ACTIVITIES OF A GROUP OF PRIVATE CITIZENS ABROAD). WE MUST ALSO HAVE SOME UNDERSTANDING FOR HIS IRRITATION AT US FOR THE EMBARRASSMENT THE BRITISH HOOLIGANS HAVE CAUSED FOR HIM BOTH OVER THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES' EVIDENT INADEQUACIES AND OVER BELGO-ITALIAN RELATIONS. FLASHES OF THIS IN PUBLIC ARE ONE OF THE PRICES WE HAVE TO PAY FOR THE LIVERPOOL THUGS' BEHAVIOUR.

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4. AT THE SAME TIME HIS MINISTERS ARE HELPFULLY DOING WHAT THEY CAN TO LIMIT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRAGEDY FOR OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS (CF TINDEHANS' ATTITUDE WITH YOU ON 1 JUNE AND NOTHOMB'S TENTATIVE IDEAS FOR DILUTING THE BELGIAN BAN ON BRITISH SPORTING TEAMS REPORTED IN MY TELNO ). IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO TRY TO ASSUAGE MARTENS' EVIDENTLY STRONG FEELINGS IN ORDER TO PROMOTE MORE HELPFUL GESTURES OF THIS KIND, AND YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHAT MIGHT BE DONE URGENTLY AT PRIME MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO BUILD ON MARTENS' GOOD EARLIER RESPONSE TO HIS VISIT TO CHEQUERS ON 2 MARCH. THIS COULD ADDITIONALLY SERVE TO IMPROVE THE CHANCE OF SUPPORT FROM MARTENS AT MILAN FOR OUR CONCEPTS OF THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

5. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO JUDGE BEST IN LONDON WHAT FORM SUCH ACTION MIGHT TAKE, BUT AS SEEN FROM HERE A PERSON L AND PRIVATE MESSAGE FROM MRS THATCHER TO MARTENS THROUGH ME IN ADVANCE OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR THE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE BEEN CAUSED FOR HIM AS A RESULT OF HEYSEL AND COVERING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY QUESTIONS AS WELL (SEE MY TELNO 197) MIGHT BE ONE WAY OF PROCEEDING.

JACKSON

FOOTBALL TRAGEDY

LIMITED

CONSULAR DEPT.

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INFO DEPT

LEGAL ADVISERS

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