



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 June 1985

Dear Charles,

Brussels Football Disaster

The Prime Minister may find it useful in advance of the Milan Summit to have the enclosed note on the present position on disbursing money to the victims of the Brussels disaster.

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

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BRUSSELS FOOTBALL DISASTER

LINE TO TAKE

1. The British Government have made a contribution of £250,000 for the families of all the victims of the disaster.
2. We are in contact with the Italian as well as Belgian and French authorities on detailed arrangements for distributing ex gratia payments of £5,000 to each of the families of those who died.

BACKGROUND

1. 38 persons died in the Brussels football disaster on 29 May (31 Italian, 4 Belgian, 2 French and 1 Briton). In the absence of any Italian or other disaster fund we are arranging for disbursements of £5,000 from HMG's contribution of £250,000 to be made direct to the families of the victims through our Embassies in Rome, Brussels and Paris. The appropriate MFAs have been consulted.
2. Payments have been made to next of kin of the two French victims. Families of the Belgian victims (as well as the wife of the UK victim resident in Brussels) have been notified and asked about their preferred method of payment. The next of kin or appropriate legal representative of the Italian victims are still being identified by the Embassy in Rome in conjunction with the Italian MFA and Ministry of Interior, but we have urged the need for early progress.
3. The total disbursement to families of the 38 dead will amount to £190,000. We have put proposals to the Italian, Belgian and French authorities on disbursing the balance of £60,000. Priority is to be given to the neediest families.



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4. The total raised through private donations seems likely to be fairly small. The Merseyside appeal has raised only a few thousand pounds. The Mirror and the Sun have also opened appeals.

5. No publicity has so far been given to the disbursement of HMG's contribution. Even though payments have not yet been made to the families of the Italian victims there would be no harm in drawing attention to the £5,000 figure in response to press or other questions. The proposed line to take has been agreed with the Embassy in Rome.

Consular Department
F C O
27 June 1985

