



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 March, 1983

Dear Cyril.

Many thanks for your letter of 10 March about Rudolf Hess. I do, of course, share your concern that he should still be in prison.

You suggest that the arrival of Andropov in Moscow might open the way for a new initiative by HMG. I agree that we should not leave any avenue unexplored. I know Francis Pym is already considering how we might best proceed and have asked him to keep you informed of any action we decide to take.

Yours sincerely
Raymond

Cyril Townsend, Esq., MP.

FIVE JR
cc: I gone 21/3
FCO

EW



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 March 1983

HESS

I told you this afternoon that Mr. Cyril Townsend MP wished to publish the letter the Prime Minister sent to him on 23 March. After consulting you and the Prime Minister, I told Mr. Townsend's Office that the Prime Minister would prefer him not to publish her letter at this stage since it would warn the Russians that we were considering making a new approach about Hess.

Mr. Townsend's secretary asked when he could make his correspondence public. I told her that the Prime Minister had promised in her letter that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would inform Mr. Townsend of any action the Government decided to take. In doing so, I was sure Mr. Pym would let him know what he could make public.

I should be grateful if you could take this into account when the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary writes to Mr. Townsend. It might be best if his letter were to be couched in terms that could be made public.

WR

R. B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

Germany



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 March, 1983

Dear Willie, signed 21/3
Hess

Thank you for your letter of 11 March with which you enclosed Mr Townsend's letter of 10 March about Rudolf Hess.

As Chairman of the All-Party Freedom for Rudolf Hess Campaign, Mr Townsend has for some years taken the lead in supporting Hess' cause in the House of Commons. When he called on Lord Belstead in September 1982, Lord Belstead undertook that we would consider with our allies a further tripartite approach to the Russians aimed at securing Hess' release. At that time, however, after careful consideration, Ministers doubted the value of another approach. The British record on appeals is good; indeed it is vastly better than the French or American. Mr Hurd raised the matter with the Soviet Ambassador in London as recently as 23 June 1982.

Since then, Andropov has taken over in Moscow and there have been suggestions in Parliament that HMG should make representations to the new Soviet leadership. FCO Ministers have decided that we should first sound out our US and French Allies on the possibility of their joining us in a tripartite approach. We have asked our Allies for a response before Easter. If they do not wish to join us, we could make a further unilateral appeal. The level of either a tripartite or a national British demarche is still for consideration.

/ We would rather not reveal all this detail to Mr Townsend. I enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister which promises that the FCO will keep him informed of any action we decide to take.

Yours ever
for *for Hides*
(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

W Rickett Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT: ~~minute~~/letter/~~teletype~~/~~despatch~~/~~note~~X

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
PRIME MINISTER

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
UnclassifiedCyril Townsend Esq MP
House of Commons

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT: HESS

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Many thanks for your letter of 11 March about Rudolf Hess. I do of course share your concern that he should still be in prison.

You suggest that the arrival of Andropov in Moscow might open the way for a new initiative by HMG. I agree that we should not leave any avenue unexplored. I know Francis Pym is already considering how we might best proceed and have asked him to keep you informed of any action we decide to take.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Germany,
July '80,
Rudolf Hess

da

Germany

11 March 1983

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 10 March. I will place this before her and you will be sent a reply as soon as possible.

W F S RICKETT

Cyril D. Townsend, Esq., M.P.

CYRIL TOWNSEND, MP.

da
25/3

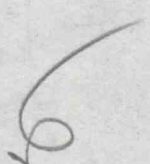
11 March 1983

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from Mr. Cyril Townsend M.P.

I should be grateful if you could provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to Mr. Townsend, to reach us by 25 March.

W F S RICKETT

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



From: CYRIL D. TOWNSEND, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

10th March 1983

Prime Minister
we will let you have
a swift reply. *CC 19*
WM
11/3

Dear Margaret,

Currently I am chairman of the All Party Free Rudolf Hess Campaign. (You will remember that Airey Neave was my predecessor in this regard.)

We have kept closely in touch with the Foreign Office over the years and I went to see John Belstead a few months ago.

For sometime now our committee has suggested I got in touch with you direct to see if you would feel able to take a personal interest in the case of Rudolf Hess who has his 89th birthday on 26th April.

Knowing of your hundred and one commitments, I have held back, but all too obviously time is not on our side and the arrival on the scene of Mr. Andropov might just give you the opportunity for some initiative?

Yours ever

Cyril

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