



ce MASTER
OK

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S

9 April 1984

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T55/84

Hon Chancellor,

Thank you for your letter of 14 March about Rudolf Hess.

I do indeed share your concern about Herr Hess's continued imprisonment. Unfortunately, as you know, this is not a matter which the three Western allies can decide without the agreement of the Soviet Union. Successive British Governments have tried on very many occasions over the last 20 years to persuade the Soviet Union to agree to his release; but they have so far remained obdurate.

I have however not given up hope of securing agreement to Hess's release. With his 90th birthday in mind we have initiated discussions with our French and American allies and are at present considering making further representations to the Russians.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Herr Dr. Helmut Kohl

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ck



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 April, 1984

See Mr.

The letter is.
AR 5
/4.

Rudolf Hess

Thank you for your letter of 30 March enclosing a copy of a letter dated 14 March from Chancellor Kohl about Rudolf Hess.

/ I enclose a draft reply. It refers to the numerous occasions on which British Governments have attempted to secure Soviet agreement to Hess's release; our record here compares favourably with that of the French and Americans. At our initiative the Allies are in fact once again considering a possible tripartite demarche to the Russians in favour of Hess's release. The first indications from our allies are that we shall be able to agree to make a demarche before Hess's 90th birthday on 26 April.

Chancellor Kohl's letter includes a reference to the fact that Hess has not been allowed a private meeting with his family. Such a meeting would be against the prison regulations. At one stage we thought it might be possible to persuade the Russians to agree, exceptionally, to a meeting between Hess and his son, at which it was hoped the son would be able to persuade his father to sign a statement of repentance. However, Hess himself destroyed this possibility by writing a letter on 12 September 1979, in which he argued that he had been unjustly imprisoned and should be released immediately. This is not a matter that should be disclosed in the Prime Minister's reply to Chancellor Kohl.

(R B Bone)

Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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DRAFT: ~~XXXXX~~ minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Chancellor Kohl

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

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Handwritten signature

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Germany - Rudolf Hess July '80

11 JUL 1984

