



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 March, 1987.

Dear Cyril

Thank you for your letter of 20 February which was also signed by Mr. Ken Weetch, M.P. about Rudolf Hess.

As you will know, we and our French and American allies have made repeated appeals to the Soviet Union, both before and since the change of leadership in Moscow, that Rudolf Hess be released on humanitarian grounds. All have sadly met with a consistently flat refusal. We, nonetheless, continue to consult with the French and Americans about when and how we might again encourage the Russians to change their short-sighted and inhumane attitude. We are at present considering the possibility of a further approach, in view of Hess's current illness.

In the circumstances and given the many other issues that I must take up during my visit to Moscow, I do not think it would be right for me to promise to raise Hess's case. But we have certainly not dropped the matter and will continue to look for good opportunities to persuade the Russians to change their minds.

I am writing similarly to Mr. Weetch.

Yours ever
Rangau

Cyril Townsend, Esq., M.P.

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I am writing similarly to Mr. Townsend.

Ken Weetch, Esq., M.P.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

ls

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

16 March 1987

Dear Charles,

Rudolf Hess

at 1100

Thank you for your letter of 26 February to Lyn Parker enclosing one of 20 February from Cyril Townsend MP and Ken Weetch MP (Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the All Party Freedom for Rudolf Hess Campaign) suggesting that the Prime Minister consider raising Hess's case during her visit to Moscow.

We have delayed replying while considering a recommendation, just received from the three Allied Missions in Berlin, that a further tripartite demarche be made to the Russians in view of Hess's deteriorating health. Now ninety two, he is in hospital with mild pneumonia and, though apparently not in immediate danger, is showing increasing signs of senility. The Secretary of State has agreed to a demarche, which, if Paris and Washington also agree (as is likely), would be made shortly, probably in the three Allied capitals.

While there might be some presentational advantage in the Prime Minister's raising Hess's case with the Russians, there is no reason to believe that the Russians would change their so far unqualified refusal to agree to his release. In view of the planned further demarche, which would take place this week, and the number of other sensitive issues for discussion in Moscow of greater importance to British interests, the Secretary of State recommends against the Prime Minister giving any undertaking to raise Hess's case, and that she reply discouragingly to Mr Townsend on the lines of the enclosed draft. In the unlikely event that in response to the Allied demarche there were indications of a change in the Soviet position, we could consider the question further.

We shall provide a short contingency brief on Hess for the Prime Minister's meeting on 23 March with Chancellor Kohl, who has recently shown renewed interest in Hess's case.

Mrs. Ever,
A C Galsworthy

(A C Galsworthy)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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DSR (Revised Sept 85)	DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note		TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +
	FROM:		Reference
	PRIME MINISTER DEPARTMENT:	TEL. NO:	Your Reference
	BUILDING:	ROOM NO:	
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	TO:		Copies to:
Top Secret	Cyril Townsend Esq MP and		
Secret	Ken Weetch Esq MP		
Confidential	House of Commons		
Restricted	London SW1		
Unclassified	SUBJECT:		
PRIVACY MARKING	Thank you for your letter of 20 February about		
..... In Confidence	Rudolf Hess.		
CAVEAT	As you will know, we and our French and American		
	allies have made repeated appeals to the Soviet Union,		
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	^{about} with the French and Americans when and how we might		
	again encourage the Russians to change their		
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	present considering the possibility of a further		
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	^{dropped} not forgotten the matter and will continue to look		
	^{good} for appropriate opportunities to persuade the Russians		
	to change their minds.		
Enclosures flag(s)	CH		

GERMANY : 17th July 80.





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CMA

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

Acc/ 26 February 1987

I attach a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from Cyril Townsend, MP and Ken Weetch, MP.

PF // I should be grateful if you could provide a draft reply for Prime Minister signature. It would be helpful if this could reach me by Thursday 12 March.

C D POWELL

Lyn Parker, Esq.
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

LB

From: CYRIL D. TOWNSEND, M.P.
KEN WEETCH, M.P.



R2442

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

25/2

20th February 1987

Dear Margaret,

We write as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the All Party Freedom Rudolf Hess Campaign. (You will remember that Airey Neave used to chair this group.)

We have kept closely in touch with the Foreign Office over the years and knowing of your hundred and one other commitments, we have not corresponded with you about the plight of Rudolf Hess since March 1983.

In a reply which you sent me on 23rd March 1983 you mentioned that you shared our concern that Hess should still be in prison, and said,

' I agree that we should not leave any avenue unexplored.'

In view of these comments we write to ask if thought can be given to raising the Hess case with the Soviet authorities during your forthcoming important visit to the Soviet Union.

We appreciate it is very late in the day, but our committee members, and undoubtedly many people in this country believe that it is fundamentally wrong that Rudolf Hess aged 93, should be in solitary confinement so long after the War.

Yours ever
Cyril

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

GERMANY

HESS

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