

53052/7

14 Detachment  
93 Section SIB RMP BAOR  
BFPO 45

25 Aug 87

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

Person deceased: Walter Richard Rudolf HESS  
Born: 26 Apr 1894 at Alexandria, Egypt

Prisoner Number 7  
Spandau Allied Prison BERLIN

1. On Mon 17 Aug 87 about 1600 hrs, information was received from Col [REDACTED]<sup>15</sup>, Chief of Staff HQ Berlin (British Sector) that earlier that afternoon, Herr Rudolf Hess (born: 26 Apr 1894) hereafter referred to as Allied Prisoner No 7, the sole remaining prisoner detained at Spandau Allied Prison, Berlin, had been conveyed to the British Military Hospital Berlin. It was intimated that Allied Prisoner No 7 was dead and the Chief of Staff directed that investigations be made surrounding the circumstances of his admittance to the hospital.

2. Enquiries within imposed limitations were immediately commenced and 'Operation Tennyson', the SIB RMP response to such information was put into effect.

3. It was learned from Lt [REDACTED]<sup>3</sup> US Army that from 1 Aug 87, elements of the 5th Bn of the 502nd US Army Infantry Regiment, McNair Barracks, Berlin, had been on guard at Spandau Allied Prison. Lt [REDACTED]<sup>3</sup> was the OC of the guard. Such duties are rotated monthly with soldiers from the four Allied governments guarding the prison. The security and care of Allied Prisoner No 7 is also administered by civilian prison warders who are employed by the four Allied Powers.

4. Investigations have revealed that about 1427 hrs on Mon 17 Aug 87, Allied Prisoner No 7 left the prison building ostensibly to go for a walk while in the charge of Mr [REDACTED]<sup>2</sup>, an American civilian warden who was on duty from 0745 hrs to 1640 hrs. At that time, Mr [REDACTED]<sup>2</sup> had already unlocked a summer house, which is a one storey construction (portacabin) located in the prison garden. Entry to that building is via a single door at the rear of two sliding glass doors at the front of the building. The garden is located in the north-west area of the prison grounds and about 1430 hrs Mr [REDACTED]<sup>2</sup> saw Allied Prisoner No 7, who had walked slowly from the prison building, enter the summer house via the rear door. For ease of reference, sketch plans depicting the summer house and surrounding area are attached at Annexes A-C to this report.

5. Mr [REDACTED]<sup>2</sup> provided a written statement in which he explained that after Allied Prisoner No 7 entered the summer house, he remained outside, as is normal practice by the warders. Mr [REDACTED]<sup>2</sup> stood by a tree approximately 10 metres distant from the summer house and after about five minutes, he walked over to the summer house to check the prisoner.



On doing so, he looked through the single window located at the rear of the building and saw that Allied Prisoner No 7 was slumped on the floor inside with his back adjacent to the rear wall. Mr [redacted] immediately entered the building via the rear door and saw that the prisoner had a piece of electrical 'extension' cable around his neck with one end of the cable tied to the handle of the small window at the rear of the building. Mr [redacted] partially lifted the prisoner to release the tension on the cable and then pulled the cable from his neck. Mr [redacted] however, is now unable to recall if there was a knot in the cable. He continues that Allied Prisoner No 7 appeared to be alive and that his eyes were open. Consequently, Mr [redacted] placed a folded blanket under the prisoner's head and loosened his shirt in an attempt to make him comfortable.

6. Mr [redacted] has stated that he then ran to the rear entrance of the prison building and, using a telephone located on the ground floor next to a spiral staircase, he spoke with Mr [redacted] the acting Chief Warden from whom he requested emergency medical assistance.

7. At the relevant time, [redacted] was the American soldier on duty in Tower 3, which is located north-west at a distance of 126 feet from the summer house. On noting Mr [redacted] obvious agitation and learning from him that there was something amiss in relation to Allied Prisoner No 7, [redacted] informed Lt [redacted] at the Guardroom by radio that first-aid was required at the summer house. Lt [redacted] will say that he immediately went to the summer house and saw Allied Prisoner No 7 laying on the floor in the manner described by Mr [redacted]. Lt [redacted] noted that Allied Prisoner No 7 appeared unconscious, but he did have a pulse. The first medical support at the scene was by [redacted] a trained Field Combat Medic, who arrived at the summer house about 1450 hrs. He was followed shortly afterwards by a second US Army Medic namely [redacted] who arrived about 1500 hrs in possession of emergency first-aid equipment. Both these specialists immediately commenced external cardiac massage and exhaled air resuscitation (mouth-to-mouth) upon Allied Prisoner No 7. It is worthy of note that while attending to Allied Prisoner No 7, [redacted] noted a red mark running from ear to ear around the patient's neck.

8. Whilst the aforementioned resuscitation measures were being made by [redacted] and [redacted], Mr [redacted] (UK), a warden on duty at the Gate guardhouse (block 23), telephoned the BMH, Berlin, at 1455 hrs and using the codeword 'Paradox' summonsed an ambulance and medical aid to the prison. In rapid response, Lt Col [redacted] the RMO 1 KOSB, travelled from Brooke Bks to the prison where he arrived about 1510 hrs. Simultaneously, an ambulance driven by Mr [redacted] a British civilian driver, c/o 62 Sqn RCT, BFPO 45, was dispatched from the hospital. Resuscitation measures in the prison grounds were continued by Lt Col [redacted] and about 1535 hrs the ambulance which contained the following persons: Allied Prisoner No 7, Lt Col [redacted], Mr [redacted] 19 (a civilian nurse employed at the prison), [redacted] 5, Mr [redacted] 8 (USA) and Mr [redacted] (France) - both prison warders, departed for the BMH. On arrival at the hospital about 1550 hrs, Allied Prisoner No 7 was taken to a prepared ward on the 2nd floor of the hospital building where Col [redacted] late RAMC, the CO of the BMH, took charge. All efforts to revive Allied



Prisoner No 7 failed and at 1610 hrs that day life was pronounced extinct by Col [REDACTED] 5

9. Evidence has been adduced in relation to continuity and the formal identification of Allied Prisoner No 7. It was subsequently learned that a one page hand-written letter in the form of a suicide note was found in the clothing of Allied Prisoner No 7 following his admission to the BMH. SIB RMP, however, were not privy to the contents and therefore further comment at this juncture would be pointless.

10. Examination of the summer house within the garden area of Spandau Allied Prison revealed evidence of considerable activity and the entire floor area was strewn with medical equipment and associated debris. However, fastened to the rear window handle, positioned at a height of 1.40 m from the floor was a 2.75 m long plastic coated electric extension cable, which clearly had a loose knot in the lower region. The significance of this particular electrical cable can be gleaned from the statement of his attending warder, Mr [REDACTED], a copy of which is attached to this report. No other marks or material of evidential value to suggest criminal involvement of any person was apparent during an examination of the scene. Because of free access to the summer house by all concerned with the prisoner, the lifting of latent finger impressions was not considered practical.

11. [REDACTED] 11, 5 Bn, 502 Inf Regt, US Army, was SNCO I/C Spandau Allied Prison from 1 Aug. He has stated that when familiarising himself with the various buildings within the prison grounds on 1 Aug 87, he noticed a length of electrical cable suspended from the rear window of the summer house. Sgt [REDACTED] continues by relating that he again saw the cable on subsequent occasions prior to Mon 17 Aug 87, always in the position referred to above. Although yet to be confirmed through interview with the respective warders, it would appear reasonable to suggest that the electric cable found in the summer house was used to extend the flex of either of the two standard lamps therein, so as to provide sufficient length to reach the centre of the room where the prisoner's chair was situated.

12. Following his demise on Mon 17 Aug 87, the remains of Allied Prisoner No 7 were secured within the mortuary of BMH Berlin pending post-mortem examination there on Wed 19 Aug 87 by [REDACTED] 21 Professor of Forensic Medicine, London Hospital Medical College. About 0820 hrs on Wed 19 Aug 87, Col [REDACTED] 7, CO BMH Berlin, formally identified the body of Allied Prisoner No 7 to Prof [REDACTED] 21 together with pathologists from the respective Allied Powers: Lt Col [REDACTED] 22 (Brit), Lt Col [REDACTED] 23 (USA), Lt Col [REDACTED] 24 (Fr) and Lt Col [REDACTED] 25 (Sov). Post-mortem examination revealed that Allied Prisoner No 7 had died following asphyxia caused by compression of the neck. Copies of the relevant death certificate and certificate of identification are attached to this report at Annexes D-F.


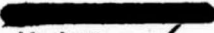
13. Various pathological samples were obtained during post-mortem examination and these have been forwarded to the Royal Army Medical College, Millbank, London, for toxicology and histology examination. When

to hand, the results of these examinations will be made known to the appropriate addressees under separate cover. At this juncture, however, it is stressed that no evidence has come to light during the course of enquiries to suggest that the death of Allied Prisoner No 7 was caused other than by his own hand.

14. Nevertheless, it has been suggested to the authorities that arrangements be made for expert comparison to be made of Allied Prisoner No 7's known writings with that of the suicide note found in his possession following admission to BMH.

15. On Thu 20 Aug 87, disposal of the remains of Allied Prisoner No 7 was formally effected by the governors of Spandau Allied Prison. His body was delivered to his family by RAF transport following a flight from RAF Gatow, Berlin, to the US Air Base at Grafenwoehr near Nurnberg.

16. Copies of all relevant statements recorded during the course of these enquiries are attached to this report. The original statements, together with all clothing recovered from the deceased, have been handed to Lt Col (Retd) AH Le Tissier MBE, British Governor, Allied Prison Spandau, against receipt.

  
  
Major  
Royal Military Police