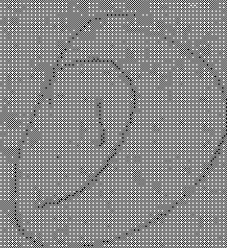


PREM 19/2780

Alcohol Policy
CP's report an Alcoholic
Misuse of Alcohol



12/11

HEALTH

June 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
13-1-81							
4-1-81							
20-1-82							
4-12-81							
13-6-82							
21-1-88							
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28-4-89							
2-5-80							
31-10-89							

PREM 19/2780

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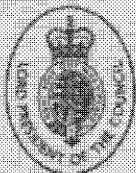
Published Papers

The following published paper(s) enclosed on this file have been removed and destroyed. Copies may be found elsewhere in The National Archives.

Prevention and Health, Drinking Sensibly; A discussion document prepared by the Health Departments of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: ISBN 0 11 320775 1

Signed B. Walsh Date 12/8/16

PREM Records Team



NBPM

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

31 October 1989

01-273 4640

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON ALCOHOL MISUSE

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP, Lord President of the Council, today made his first public statement as Chairman of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse.

Speaking after the Group's eleventh meeting, Sir Geoffrey said:

"I have been impressed by the number and range of initiatives the Group have taken so far. The Group's efforts have led to the establishment of a successful and highly effective approach to alcohol misuse which co-ordinates action by Government and a wide range of outside interests from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

"At today's meeting we have had a first in-depth look at the services which support and care for those who experience drinking problems. Health authorities and Health boards, social services and voluntary agencies offer a wide range of advice, counselling and treatment to those who need help; the local specialist voluntary workers and self-help groups provide a major source of support -- both for problem drinkers and their families and friends.

"We took particular note of evidence that many patients who receive general medical treatment in NHS hospitals or seek social services help are in fact suffering from health or social problems connected with their drinking but not recognised as such. We know from studies based on the limited information currently available that the cost of treating alcohol related conditions in the NHS was estimated to exceed £100 million a year in 1985."

The Group have asked the UK Health Departments to establish, with the assistance of the local statutory authorities, a clearer and more precise picture of the extent of the burden which alcohol-related conditions place on health and social work services, the balance of existing provision as between general and specialist alcohol services and proposals for a future service strategy.

The Group also gave further consideration to research needs and agreed the detailed outlines of projects to be discussed with research councils and the drinks industry.

The Group welcomed the Department of Health's decision to award £1.7m over the next 3 years to the national voluntary agency, Alcohol Concern, to undertake a wide range of prevention and

services work. The Department has also awarded £112,000 to a local project designed to encourage the greater involvement of family doctors and others in the primary health care field in identifying and tackling problem drinking at an early stage.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

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* = New member

= New member for DTI but previously member for the Home Office.



*Kno
ce boss
Office*

10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

2 May 1989

ALCOHOL MISUSE

Thank you for your letter of 27 April. The Prime Minister was grateful for the work which has been done to revise the proposed Annual Report and is content for it to be published to coincide with the Lord President's Group's next meeting on 6 June.

Dominic Morris

Steven Catling, Esq.,
Lord President's Office.

SW2ATR

①
PRIME MINISTER

ALCOHOL MISUSE

You saw an earlier draft of the Lord President's proposed annual report of his Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse. You felt it needed pepping up. They have now re-done it, consulting Bernard. It is a great deal better. I do not suggest you wade through it. You might just like to glance at the Chairman's introduction and the three-page action list.

Content for it to be published to coincide with the Group's next meeting on 6 June?

Yes
ml

DM

(DOMINIC MORRIS)

28 April 1989

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the first year's work of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse. The group was established in September 1987 at the instigation of the Home Secretary, The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP, and the Secretary of State for Social Services, the Rt Hon John Moore MP, to review and develop the Government's strategy in this area.

As Leader of the House and Lord President of the Council I was appointed chairman of the Group which comprises representatives from 12 Government Departments. I report regularly to the Government as a whole.

We decided at an early stage in our work to concentrate on swift, co-ordinated action to deal with the worst problems.

As you will see from the report, we have pursued our remit energetically and taken 19 separate initiatives (Page ii). In addition action on another nine points is in hand (Page vi).

I would like to thank all my Ministerial colleagues and officials for their support and ideas in tackling a serious health and social hazard.

I would also like to express my appreciation to others who, like the Government, are committed to discourage alcohol misuse and promote sensible drinking. These include health promotion, voluntary and religious organisations; the media, including broadcasters; the alcoholic drinks industry; police and probation officers; licensees and licensing justices; counselling services; retailers; teachers; and social workers and medical staff.

We believe we have made a useful start in achieving a more co-ordinated attack on the harm done to individuals and society by alcohol abuse.

As Chapter VI - The Next Steps shows, we intend to keep up the momentum of our work.

Much still needs to be done to bring about more sensible drinking and eliminate the damage, distress, misery, and ill-health which misuse of alcohol causes.

[Chairman's signature]

ACTION LIST

This list summarises the action taken by the Group in conjunction with many outside interests during the first year's work.

1. Action has been taken to:

- toughen up the law on underage drinking with increased fines and more responsibility on landlords, wholesalers and the off-licensed trade (Action - Home Office);
- remind the police and courts about their powers to deal with alcohol-related disorder, taking account of the views of the police, licensing justices, magistrates, the trade and the drinks, leisure and entertainments industries (Action - Chairman of Ministerial Group, Home Secretary, Lord Chancellor, Association of Chief Police Officers, trade and industry interests);
- issue advice to Scottish police and licensing boards about handling disorder associated with late night extensions (Action - Scottish Home and Health Department);
- launch a voluntary identity card scheme for young drinkers (Action - licensed trade and trade journals);
- revise alcohol advertising codes of practice (Action - Independent Broadcasting Authority, Advertising Standards Authority, Cinema Advertising Association, Department of Trade and Industry);
- agree on new schemes to make it more difficult for convicted drink/driving offenders to get their licences back (Action - Department of Transport);
- beef up the public television advertising campaign on drink/driving with the help of the drinks industry (Action - Department of Transport);
- launch "Wheelwatch" and "Age Watch" poster and advice campaigns for licensees and the public (Action - Brewers Society);
- conduct roadside surveys of the incidence of drink/driving (Action - Department of Transport);
- review the portrayal of alcohol on television (Action - Independent Broadcasting Authority and British Broadcasting Company);
- end insurance against disqualification for drink/driving (Action - Department of Trade and Industry and the insurance industry);
- increase the range of low and no alcohol drinks and their popularity with the consumer (Action - drinks industry);

- change the duty structure to encourage the production of other lower strength drinks (Action - the Treasury);
- establish a new Unit to carry forward initiatives on alcohol in the workplace (Action - Employment Department Group);
- conduct a thorough-going review of alcohol education strategies (Action - Department of Health, Health Education Authority, Scottish Office, Scottish Health Education Group, Welsh Office, Health Promotion Authority for Wales, Northern Ireland Office, Health Promotion Authority Northern Ireland and Department of Education and Science);
- issue new training advice on alcohol to the medical profession and social services (Action - Department of Health);
- provide finance to support back-up materials and a help line for a BBC Radio 1 initiative on alcohol and young people (Action - Department of Health, Home Office, Welsh Office, Scottish Office, Department of Transport, Department of Education & Science);
- sponsor projects by voluntary organisations to look at pre and post release counselling for offenders (Action - Home Office);
- launch an Office of Population Censuses and Surveys pre-Licensing Act survey of drinking habits in England and Wales as a benchmark to test the effects of the new licensing laws (Action - Home Office).

2. As this report was being prepared other action was in hand to:

- issue guidance on co-ordinated local action to tackle alcohol misuse with examples of good practice, sources of advice and helpful publications (Action - Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Science, Employment Department Group, Department of Transport, Welsh Office, inter-departmental Circular prepared in consultation with outside interests as well as statutory organisations; Scottish Office Circular under preparation);
- introduce new labelling requirements on pre-packaged and dispensed drinks (Action - Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods);
- launch "Drinkwise" public education campaigns in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland (Action - Department of Health, Alcohol Concern, Health Education Authority, Brewers Society, Scottish Health Education Group, Scottish Office);
- conduct an OPCS post-Licensing Act survey of drinking habits in England and Wales (Action - Department of Health);

- issue new advice on health education in prisons (Action - Home Office) and alcohol in the workplace (Action - Employment Department Group);
- sponsor novel approaches to alcohol education including the work of a schools theatre group (Action - Department of Health and Department of Education and Science);
- identify research needs and sponsor relevant projects in co-operation with research councils and the industry;
- seek the views of young people themselves, parents, teachers and governors about alcohol education strategies in schools, the home and the youth service (Action - Department of Education and Science/Scotch Whisky Association);
- draft guidance for licensing justices on the points taken into account when considering licensing applications (Action - Magistrates Association in consultation with the police and the trade).

ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND

The Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse was formed in September 1987 against the following background:

1. Alcohol is consumed in varying quantities by some 90% of the United Kingdom adult population. In the United Kingdom:
 - * On average each adult aged 18 and over consumed the equivalent of 9.5 litres of pure alcohol during 1987. (1)
 - * The average household spent some £8 per week on alcohol during 1986. (2)
 - * As a nation, we spent nearly £17,500 million on alcohol in 1987. (3)
2. Alcohol provides enjoyment and psychological benefit to many and performs a very useful function as a social lubricant. Most people who drink alcohol suffer no lasting harm. In addition the alcoholic drinks industry plays an important part in the economy with about 98,000 people (4) employed in spirit distilling, brewing and malting, and wine, cider and perry making. In 1987 the value of excise duties and VAT collected on alcoholic drinks was £6.5 billion (5) (equivalent to about 4% of Government income) and the industry's contribution to the United Kingdom Gross Domestic Product was around £2.2 billion. (6) Exports, predominantly of spirits were valued at £1.4 billion while imports (predominantly wine) were worth £1.0 billion - a positive trade balance of £400 million. (7)
3. This is the positive side. Set against this, the Government have become increasingly concerned about the considerable health and social harm which can be caused by the misuse of alcohol. A number of individual Departments have for some time been undertaking a range of activities to tackle alcohol misuse but increased evidence of the extent of alcohol-related harm called for sharper action with a single national focus. Hence the establishment of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse.
4. The Group's terms of reference are:-

To review and develop the Government's strategy for combating the misuse of alcohol and to oversee its continued implementation, having particular regard to:

 - (i) the development of proposals for the more effective implementation of that strategy, taking into account the activities already undertaken by Government, by the alcoholic drinks industry and by voluntary and other bodies;
 - (ii) the relationship between alcohol use and misuse and the effect on alcohol misuse of those factors which influence the use of alcohol in society at large;

(iii) priorities for the future allocation and deployment of resources in the various preventive, treatment and other services and schemes which play a part in preventing, reducing or remedying alcohol misuse and its ill-effects on the family and on society more widely;

(iv) the arrangements within and outside Government for the co-ordination, development and enforcement of policy on alcohol misuse;

and to make such recommendations from time to time as may seem appropriate.

CHAPTER 1: ALCOHOL MISUSE - THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

- 1 The majority of the United Kingdom population drink alcohol and they do so moderately and sensibly. Unfortunately a significant minority drink in such a way as to cause harm to both themselves and others. Those who give cause for concern are not restricted to a few heavily dependent "alcoholics". They also include a much larger number of people who persistently drink more than is "good for them" or who drink at inappropriate times.
- 2 Misuse comes in broadly two forms:-
 - a2 The dangerous acts which an unsuitable amount of alcohol at any one time can produce by impairing concentration and skills or reducing inhibitions, for example -
 - * accidents with cars or other machinery
 - * other accidents
 - * violence in the family
 - * other crime, particularly offences of disorder and holliganism, occurring in or near licensed premises.
 - b2 The long-term effects of persistent over-consumption of alcohol, for example -
 - * on the health of the individual (including the foetus)
 - * on the individual's work and employment prospects
 - * on the economic and social well-being of the family
 - * and ultimately, on the existence of the family as a unit.

EXTENT AND COSTS OF ALCOHOL MISUES

- 3 It is extremely difficult to estimate the full extent and cost of alcohol misuse in this country and the accuracy of many estimates is open to question. However, the following statistics and estimates from research findings give some indication of the widespread and sizeable nature of the current level of alcohol misuse:-
 - An estimated 1.5 million people in the United Kingdom are drinking at levels now regarded as definitely harmful and at least 7 million people are drinking at levels now regarded by three Medical Royal Colleges as over sensible limits. (8)
 - 123,040 people are convicted of drink/drive offences in the United Kingdom. (11)
 - About 1,400 road accident deaths in Great Britain each year are associated with excess alcohol - ie, about one in four of all road deaths. (9)

- 86,625 people in Great Britain are cautioned for, or convicted of drunkenness. (10)
 - 20 - 30% of violent offences and disorderly offences, falling short of serious violence, which come to police notice take place in or near licensed premises. A survey of public disorder outside metropolitan areas conducted in 1987 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), found that heavy drinking featured in 90% of the incidents recorded. (12)
 - 3,308 deaths in the United Kingdom from all cirrhosis and alcohol-related mental illness causes occurred in 1986. (13)
 - 22,578 admissions to psychiatric hospitals and units in the United Kingdom with alcohol-related diagnoses took place in 1986. (14)
 - 7,520 discharges, including deaths, from non-psychiatric hospitals in England of people with a clear alcohol-related diagnosis were recorded in 1985. (15)
- 4 Researchers have estimated that the cost to society of alcohol misuse amounted to £1.8 billion in 1985 (16). The estimate is crude and conservative; it does not, for example, include the costs of hospital out-patient and day-patient care, of home accidents, fire damage or the costs of social work and the probation service.
- 5 We fully recognise the need for more reliable and accurate estimates of the size of the problem in the United Kingdom. To this end we have prepared a list of research priorities, now under discussion with research councils, the drinks industry and Departmental research units leading to studies which will improve available data. What is only too clear is that there is a sizeable problem which must be tackled.

CHAPTER II - THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH

- 1 At our first meeting in November 1987 we reviewed the data on alcohol misuse and action already being taken to deal with the problem. We felt that the main areas of concern shared by Government Departments and many outside organisations were:
 - the continuing rise in virtually all available indicators of alcohol-related harm to health, some of which were at their highest recorded levels;
 - links between alcohol and crime: among the issues of particular concern were the incidence of drink/driving and evidence of a strong link between binge beer drinking by young men (18-24) and violent, disorderly conduct occurring in and around pubs, clubs, discos, etc, particularly at closing time;
 - the drinking habits of young people: recent studies had revealed that young people (particularly boys) reported drinking alcohol at an earlier age than previously; a significant number reported drinking in pubs under the age of 18;
 - the general public and many of the caring professions, employers, trade unionists and teachers were not well informed about the harm which alcohol misuse can cause and about what constitutes sensible drinking;
 - media and advertising presentation of alcohol generally extolled its benefit without sufficient counter-balancing reference to its potentially harmful effects;
- 2 We decided that an approach targeted on areas of greatest concern was likely to be the most effective and that our first "target" should be the worrying problem of young people's drinking. On this topic, which raised a wide range of general and specific issues, we were greatly aided by the work which had already been undertaken by the Standing Conference on Crime Prevention Working Group on Young People and Alcohol, chaired by Baroness Masham. The Masham Group's report (17) had been published on 24 November 1987 and we were able to take this as a basis for discussion at our second meeting in January 1988. For convenience the Masham Group's report was considered under four main headings:

- Health Education
- Advertising and the Media
- Treatment and Facilities
- The Law

HEALTH EDUCATION

3. We believe that it is particularly important for people to have a better understanding of how alcohol works and how to drink sensibly. We reviewed current and planned future action by the Health Education bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who were already heavily engaged in this task. In England, the Health Education Authority (HEA) gives high priority to education on alcohol. The HEA's alcohol programme aims to reduce the harmful consequences of alcohol misuse to individuals and society, to promote sensible drinking and to develop a climate of opinion to facilitate prevention measures at national and local level. The Authority, in conjunction with Regional Health Authorities, is funding two major alcohol education campaigns. In the South West the "Understanding Alcohol" campaign has led to the establishment of 12 District alcohol co-ordinator posts and 200 primary care professional workers being trained as alcohol educators. In the North West the "Drinkwisely North West" project has produced a wide range of public education materials for national distribution; these were tested with a 500 strong "sensible drinkers panel" drawn from members of the public. The project has also surveyed public attitudes to alcohol policy measures and monitored media presentation of alcohol. The HEA has distributed 2½ million copies of public information leaflets on sensible drinking. It has also collaborated with the national voluntary agency, Alcohol Concern, and other organisations to produce guidelines for the implementation of alcohol workplace policies in the NHS, distributing more than 2,000 copies.

4. In Scotland, the Scottish Health Education Group (SHEG) accords high priority to alcohol education within its broad-based strategy of encouraging positive attitudes to health and the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. SHEG's programme in 1988-89 includes a TV and press campaign aimed at young people. It conveys the message that excessive drinking is not fashionable or trendy behaviour in the environment or lifestyle of today's young people. Health education, including education about alcohol, is also a current priority in the development of the school curriculum and SHEG has been involved in a number of initiatives in this area. SHEG has also published a booklet "Drink and Drugs at Work: A Manager's Guide" in association with the Institute for Supervisory Management. SHEG is supporting the Scottish Council on Alcohol's Drinkwise public education campaign in February 1989 which is also receiving grant support from the Scottish Office.

5. In Wales, primary prevention is undertaken by the district health authority health education units and also by the Health Promotion Authority for Wales in association with Alcohol Concern Wales. During 1988-89 surveys have been carried out throughout Wales concerning knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to alcohol. This information is to be used for planning current and future programmes and for targeting interventions. More importantly it will provide a baseline for evaluating success over the longer term. These efforts have been concentrated on raising awareness among professionals and other decision makers about the problem and about the appropriate health promotion measures for dealing with it. Complementary programmes have been developed which include a very close working relationship with advisory teachers of local education authorities, who in the past were funded to combat drug misuse but whose remit has now been changed to encompass alcohol misuse and other health promotion issues. There has also been close liaison with local media - notably in the provision of professional advice for a major television series on sensible drinking. This will be broadcast nationwide by BBC in Spring 1990 and will provide an excellent springboard for the Wales alcohol programme. Particular attention is to be paid to the workplace, which provides an ideal location for promoting sensible drinking and helping problem drinkers. Efforts will also be made to increase the availability of low or non-alcoholic alternatives, capitalising on relationships already established by Heartbeat Wales with the retail food and drinks industry.

6. In Northern Ireland, the recently established Health Promotion Unit has been asked to give priority to the development of a health promotion programme on alcohol, following the issue by the Department of Health and Social Services of a health promotion strategy for the prevention of alcohol misuse. The programme, which is scheduled to commence in 1990-91, will provide information and advice to the general population and to those most at risk of alcohol misuse. The main objectives during 1989-90 will be to raise awareness and understanding of the problems of alcohol misuse amongst health professionals, to support the implementation of workplace policies on alcohol and to identify, in close association with those working in this area, the need for health education support materials.

7. We recognise the importance of education taking place in schools on the dangers of alcohol misuse. We therefore welcomed the inclusion of health education as one of the main cross-curricular themes to be covered in the National Curriculum. The Secretary of State for Education and Science has now accepted recommendations that the science curriculum should cover the risks of alcohol misuse and how they affect body processes. The Group noted that funding provided by the Department of Education and Science under Education Support Grants and the Local Education Authority Training Grants Scheme has provided guidance for schools and teachers on education about alcohol misuse. We welcomed the further efforts being made by the Department in this area. In

particular, the Department's organisation of a conference on "Young People and Alcohol" in February 1989, funded by the Scotch Whisky Association. The conference will involve a major survey of the attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of young people towards alcohol. Those attending the conference will include pupils, parents and teachers from secondary schools throughout England.

8. On the wider front we welcomed planned legislation to implement an EC Directive requiring pre-packaged alcoholic drinks to be labelled to show the volume of alcohol they contain, and proposals to extend this requirement to dispensed drinks. This extension will require public houses, bars, restaurants etc to display information on alcoholic strengths of a representative sample of alcoholic drinks offered for sale (up to a maximum number of 30). We particularly welcomed the drinks industry's commitment to publicise the new strength-marking requirements so that consumer awareness of the alcoholic strength of different drinks could be improved.

9. Non-alcoholic and low alcohol beers and wines are the fastest growing sector of the market. We welcome proposals for legislation to restrict the use of the term "low alcohol" to drinks not exceeding 1.2% alcohol by volume. This will be a useful measure to prevent consumers from being misled by labelling and advertising into believing drinks are lower in alcohol than they actually are. We also welcome efforts already made by the drinks industry to promote these products and make them available more widely. The Group felt that it was particularly important to have low and no-alcohol drinks readily available and attractively presented as alternatives for people to choose. We welcomed the changes in the structure of alcohol excise duties in the 1988 Budget which would encourage this sector of the market to expand further.

ADVERTISING AND THE MEDIA

10. We were concerned that efforts on health education would be less effective if contradictory messages were coming from the media and advertising. We therefore asked the BBC and IBA to review the way alcohol is presented to viewers both in individual programmes and cumulatively. Both responded favourably - broadcasters can play an invaluable role in getting across a better understanding of the damage caused by heavy drinking. The results of reviews conducted by both broadcasting organisations will be considered as part of the Group's second year programme.

11. We also asked the IBA, ASA, Cinema Advertising Association and the Cable Authority, in conjunction with the drinks and advertising industries to look again at their Codes of Practice concerning the advertising of alcohol. A positive response was received and the Codes have now been

strengthened, particularly in their requirements about advertising and young people. We intend to monitor the effects of these changes.

TREATMENT AND FACILITIES

12. We considered that action we were initiating at national level had to be matched by effective action at local level. We felt it important therefore to encourage all the local services and organisations with an interest in reducing alcohol misuse to get together so that they could identify particular problems in their area, and work out a programme for dealing with them. This is not just a matter for the health services and specialist voluntary groups. The social services, education and youth services, police, probation and magistrates all have an interest. So do local businesses, the local drinks industry and many broader-based voluntary organisations. Useful steps to reduce alcohol misuse and deal with local problems do not always need additional resources; much can be achieved by adjusting existing provision and policies to meet local needs.

13. In some areas there is already close co-operation between local services on alcohol misuse and many useful initiatives are already being taken. But we felt it would be helpful to bring together advice on tackling local problems with examples of good local practice in an interdepartmental Circular. Consultations on a draft Circular took place in the Summer of 1988 and the Circular is scheduled for issue in England and Wales in February 1989. Work is under way on a similar Circular to be issued by the Scottish Office.

THE LAW

14. The Group rejected the view held in some quarters that the modest extension of the Licensing Laws in England and Wales proposed in the Licensing Bill 1988 was at odds with the Government's plans for tackling alcohol misuse. If people understood how to drink sensibly there was no reason why they should not buy a drink in a pub at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, particularly as they could already buy one in a supermarket. The Group does not believe that arbitrary, blanket restrictions on the adult population as a whole are an effective way of tackling the problem of alcohol misuse - the best way forward is to design measures targeted at problem or "at risk" groups. In this context, the Group welcomed the Home Secretary's agreement to increase the maximum penalty for and to tighten the law on selling alcohol to underage persons, to make it an offence for wholesalers to sell alcohol to people under 18 and to require all alcohol sales to be supervised by persons over 18. They also noted proposals to monitor the effect of the new legislation on drinking levels through "before and after" surveys conducted by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). Consideration of the results of these surveys will form part of the Group's second year programme.

15. In addition to recommending that the law on sales of alcohol to young people should be strengthened, the Masham Group proposed a number of measures to strengthen licensing law enforcement, clarify the criteria operated by licensing justices and improve training. There was also a recommendation to the Government to consider banning the drinking of alcohol by young people in a public place. Action on these recommendations was taken forward as part of a package of measures to deal with alcohol-related disorder - see Chapter V.

CHAPTER III - DRINKING AND DRIVING

1. At their third and fourth meetings the Group concentrated on the important issue of drinking and driving, with particular reference to the North Report on road traffic law which was published in April 1988.

THE PROBLEM

2. Drinking and driving above the legal limit has killed around 1,000 people each year. In addition, nearly 400 pedestrians killed each year in road accidents are over the legal limit for drivers. The cost to society of these total casualties is about £700 million in Great Britain.

THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-DRINK/DRIVING CAMPAIGN

3. The campaign against drinking and driving is managed by the Department of Transport. They have developed a three-pronged approach aimed at changing underlying public attitudes:

- getting the issue reported and discussed by the media as news and current affairs;
- encouraging private sector participation in the campaign;
- paid advertising.

4. The media have responded well to this in that drinking and driving is now regularly treated as news and current affairs and is covered in feature articles, editorial comment and in some television and radio programmes.

5. The Department have helped in building an alliance of interested parties including Government, police, brewers, landlords, the retail trade, motoring organisations, insurers, the churches and the medical profession. Together there has been success in raising the level of general interest in the drink/driving issue. An example of the co-operation this alliance has produced was the launch in 1987 by the Brewers Society of their "Wheelwatch" campaign designed to promote the availability, display and sale in pubs of "safe drinks for drivers". The brewing industry are spending large sums of money (some £25 million this year) on the development and marketing of low and non-alcoholic beers. This is now the most rapidly growing sector of the drinks market.

6. Paid publicity has focussed on two or three campaigns each year comprising poster advertisements and television commercials. Drinking and driving is a year round problem - over the limit drinking is more prevalent during the summer months with their long light evenings - and the strategy in

recent years has been to develop a year round campaign with phased publicity peaks, rather than the previous concentration of effort in the pre-Christmas period. Paid advertising remains a powerful weapon. It is expensive and is not the only way to capture attention. The same audience can be reached more effectively by generating media interest.

7. The Department carry out regular monitoring exercises to track the effectiveness of their campaigns. Research shows that the climate of opinion is changing significantly. The most encouraging measure is that drink/driving deaths fell below 1,000 in 1987.

8. There is evidence of a long term continuing reduction in the amount of drinking and driving. Responses to survey questions indicate that the number of people admitting to driving after drinking has been significantly reduced in the last ten years. Surveys show a greater public awareness of the problem and a hardening of attitudes against drinking drivers. Surveys of self-reported behaviour in 1987 suggest that the incidence of driving while above the limit has fallen over the past ten years from 1.7 million occasions per week to about half that level. This is the first time in ten years that research has suggested that fewer than 1 million above the limit driving occasions per week occur.

9. Following the success of, and public support for, roadside surveys of the actual incidence of drinking and driving (carried out in Spring 1988 in Warwickshire and Sussex) the Department now plan to conduct similar surveys on a regular basis so as to allow more accurate reporting of the problem. The surveys, which involved over 2,600 drivers, confirmed that the highest risk group are men in their 20's who have usually been drinking beer or lager in the pub. This is the main target group for the Department's paid publicity. Participation in the surveys involved a voluntary breath test. This showed that alcohol was present in 17% of drivers; 1.7% were over the legal limit. Although the percentage over the limit was encouragingly low it still represents a potentially very large number of drink/drive occasions. If all the 44 people concerned were to drive while over the limit just twice every week of the year, they would between them be responsible for some 4,500 occasions when they significantly put other people's lives - and their own - at risk.

ENFORCEMENT

10. Underpinning the anti-drink/drive campaign has been an increasingly high level of enforcement activity by the police. In 1987 they carried out nearly 400,000 roadside breath tests, nearly 30% more than the previous year, leading to over 125,000 convictions - up 5,000 on the previous year.

11. At present, the police may stop any vehicle at random and may then administer a breath test if they have reasonable cause to suspect the driver has been drinking, has been involved in an accident or has committed a moving traffic offence. The view of the Association of Chief Police Officers

(ACPO) has for many years been that their powers to stop and breath test drivers are adequate. They have recently suggested a change in the law so as to allow them "unfettered discretion" to stop and test, without satisfying the "reasonable cause" requirements. They have not asked specifically for "random breath testing" although complete discretion would allow random testing. A public consultation exercise is now in progress.

HIGH RISK OFFENDERS

12. While noting the success of the anti-drink/drive campaign and the support provided by the police and the public, the Group have been concerned about the threat posed by drivers who may have a drink problem in the medical sense. At the third meeting the Group discussed the Department of Transport's existing scheme for medical assessment of "high risk offenders" before the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Centre return their driving licences after a period of disqualification. High risk offenders (HROs) are presently defined as those who have been convicted twice within 10 years for drink/driving offences at two and a half times or more over the limit*, or for twice refusing to submit to a breath test. The Group took the view that tougher action was called for in respect of this category of offenders and we asked the Department of Transport to consider widening the scope of the HRO scheme. Having completed a review of the effectiveness of the scheme, and the resource implications of extending it, the Department proposed that in future it should apply to any driver convicted just once at two and a half times the limit, or for refusing a breath test. Furthermore it proposed that convicted drivers should be required to pay both for the administrative work involved in dealing with their application for return of their licence and for the medical examination which they are required to undergo. We welcomed the proposed extension of the scheme and asked the Department to monitor its effectiveness. The extended scheme should lead to medical assessment of up to 40,000 offenders each year, in due course, if drink/driving is not reduced.

* The limit is 80 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood (80 mg/100ml). 2½ times the limit is therefore 200 mg/100 ml

ROAD TRAFFIC LAW REVIEW

13. During the year the Group considered the North Report on Road Traffic Law and welcomed in particular the recommendations for dealing with drinking and driving. We recognised the need for full consultation on the Report's proposals in this important area but stressed the need for early decisions, followed by legislation as soon as possible.

14. We identified the proposed new offence of causing death by careless driving after drinking as a key proposal. Other proposals to which we attached importance are the recommendation to end insurance against disqualification for drinking and driving, which we asked should receive immediate consideration, and the recommendation that the penalties for failing to stop at or report an accident should be increased. We endorsed the North Committee's view that there was a clear link between drinking and this increasing practice. The Group also saw potential in initiatives to prevent further offending, such as retraining and retesting, rehabilitation schemes and selective use of bail conditions to prevent those on drink/driving charges from driving while awaiting trial.

15. The Secretary of State for Transport announced progress on the Government's consideration of the North Report recommendations on 26 July 1988 in a Parliamentary Written Answer, when he said that Ministers had accepted the Review's basic conclusion that a way must be found to ensure that convictions can be secured and that appropriate penalties available to the Courts for people who drink and drive with tragic consequences. Discussions are now well advanced with the insurance industry about bringing to an end the offering of policies insuring against disqualification.

16. The recommendation that the penalty points for failure to stop or report an accident should be increased has now been implemented. An Order increasing the range from 4-9 to 8-10 will come into force on 1 March 1989. The Government's overall conclusions on the North Committee proposals will be announced early in 1989.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

6. We took a particular interest in the arrangements made for Government's own employees in the Civil Service. Alcohol misuse at work has long been of concern to management and the trades unions in the Civil Service. In 1982 both sides agreed to a joint policy statement on tackling alcohol misuse in the workplace. The objective of the statement is to ensure that civil servants at all levels and in all occupational groups understand well the dangers of alcohol misuse and to encourage positive action where problems exist. Each government department has used the statement as a basis for determining guidance to their staff on practice and procedures for dealing with the problem. The thrust of the initiative is primarily to encourage the problem drinker to face up to his/her situation and accept that he/she may need expert advice and treatment to help recover and lead a healthy and useful life.

7. Departments review their arrangements under the policy at regular intervals and remind their staff of departmental procedures. The Office for the Minister for the Civil Service (OMCS) monitors and reports to departments the incidence of recorded problems of alcohol misuse in the Civil Service. It also keeps in touch with developments by subscribing to leading organisations in this field and disseminates news of advances and best practice to personnel and welfare staff in departments. The Group welcomed OMCS plans to conduct a thorough review of existing policy and guidance to departments early in 1989.

CHAPTER IV - ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE

1. At the fifth meeting, the Group looked at the problem of alcohol in the workplace. Alcohol has a fundamental impact on industry and commerce - not only in terms of the costs of reduced health and safety but also reduced efficiency, reduced productivity and poor performance. The workplace is an important forum in which much can be done to prevent alcohol misuse and deal with its consequences.

2. As with general data on alcohol misuse, obtaining precise statistics on the state of the effect of alcohol misuse on the workplace has been difficult. However, one estimate (based on research done in England and Wales in 1985) showed that the cost to industry of sick absence alone due to alcohol misuse was over £700 million annually.

3. The Health and Safety Commission and Executive have an interest in the effect of alcohol misuse upon workplace accidents and the health of employees. The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service has an interest in the implications for industrial relations of alcohol misuse.

THE WORK OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE

4. The Group shared the concern of the Commission and the Executive about the effect of alcohol misuse on industrial health and safety. The consumption of alcohol contributes to a significant number of accidents at work. In some occupations the consumption of even a small amount of alcohol can pose a particularly high risk to the drinker and to others - train drivers and pilots are two examples. The Executive has always maintained a major role in relation to alcohol misuse at work. Its activities include the publication in 1981 of a guidance booklet "The Problem Drinker at Work", the advisory work of Executive field staff, investigations into particular incidents and involvement in research projects.

WORK OF THE ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE UNIT, EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT

5. We welcomed the Employment Department Group's decision to set up a special unit primarily to look at the wider implications of alcohol misuse and the workplace. As its first task, the Unit is producing a leaflet for dissemination to all small and medium-sized firms in early 1989, encouraging employers to take a positive approach towards tackling alcohol abuse at work. The leaflet is designed to persuade employers that they have everything to gain from taking action now to combat the ill-effects of alcohol misuse. The Unit is liaising closely with the UK Health Promotion bodies and other voluntary and private organisations who undertake a wide range of education and advice activities especially geared to the workplace setting.

7. TREASURY AND HM CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Treasury have a general policy interest in respect of alcoholic drink taxation. Customs have specific responsibility for indirect taxation on alcoholic drinks including both detailed policy considerations and administration of the appropriate duties.

8. EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT GROUP

The EDG interest in alcohol misuse arises mainly their responsibility for industrial relations legislation and health and safety at work. Alcohol misuse by an employee can lead to poor work performance and absenteeism, which can in turn involve the employee in his/her company's disciplinary procedure and ultimately lead to dismissal. Such misuse can also contribute to accidents at work, with which the Health and Safety Commission/Executive are concerned; it may also be relevant to other HSC/E concerns such as assaults on public service staff, or public safety.

9. DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The Sport and Recreation Division which works to the Minister for Sport are responsible for questions relating to the sponsorship of sport, including that provided by the alcohol industry. They also have a major interest in the relationship between alcohol and football hooliganism although the Home Office are the lead Department for this issue.

10. OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE

The OMCS have an interest in the effect of alcohol misuse on the efficiency and conduct of the Civil Service in the UK.

11. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

The Ministry of Defence have an interest in policies affecting the control of alcohol and the treatment of its misuse in relation to service personnel.

12. NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTTISH AND WELSH OFFICES

In relation to their own territories the Northern Ireland, Scottish and Welsh Offices deal with aspects of alcohol policy covered by the Departments listed above except where these Departments have responsibilities which extend throughout the United Kingdom, in particular the Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Treasury and Customs and Excise.

CHAPTER V: ALCOHOL AND DISORDER

1. The question of links between alcohol and crime has been exercising the minds of researchers for some time. A study to clarify the nature of the association between heavy drinking and offending is one of the research projects included on a "menu" of projects drawn up by the Group for discussion with research councils and the industry.
2. But whatever the research needs, nobody who walks around the centres of many towns and cities in the late evening can have any doubt about the influence of excessive drinking on rowdiness and violence or the climate of fear and menace it creates. A survey of public disorder outside metropolitan areas conducted in 1987 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) found that heavy drinking featured in 90% of the incidents recorded.
3. Prior to the establishment of the Ministerial Group, the Home Office, and others, had already been acting on this issue. In particular, a 1986 Report to the Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention "Violence Associated with Licensed Premises" had examined the problem and made recommendations as to the action which might be taken. Several local projects, including multi-agency crime prevention demonstration projects in Coventry and Newport (Gwent) had been established to carry forward recommendations in the Report. Following consideration of the issue by the Group, further advice on crime prevention measures with details of effective local action were included in the inter-departmental Circular (see Chapter II, paragraph 13).
4. In July, following publication of the ACPO Survey and Royal Assent to the Licensing Act 1988 (see Chapter II), Home Office proposals for handling alcohol-related disorder were considered by the Group. The proposals (since implemented) incorporated action to secure operational improvements to the police response to incidents of disorder outside metropolitan areas and to secure speedier court hearings for those accused of committing offences in the course of sudden outbreaks of hooliganism. But a number of measures were directed specifically at licensing law enforcement and other alcohol-related issues.

LICENSING LAW ENFORCEMENT

5. At the end of July the Group's Chairman, the Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor held a meeting with interested bodies including the Magistrates' Association and the drinks, leisure and entertainments industry. Meetings also took place with representatives of ACPO. These meetings revealed a broad consensus about action to tackle alcohol and disorder through better management of premises and tougher enforcement of the licensing laws. Guidance was issued to the police and courts on 5 August 1988 (Appendix). This draws

attention to the wide powers available to prevent and curb disorder, infringements of the licensing law and drunkenness; the new powers to object to and revoke licences at any licensing session with examples of possible grounds; the usefulness of visits to licensed premises by licensing justices and police with examples of points to note; enforcement of the law on purchase of alcohol by under 18s (in public houses and other outlets) including reference to identity cards. It also provides information about crime prevention measures and exclusion orders in respect of persons convicted of violence or threatening violence on licensed premises. Copies of the guidance were sent to representative organisations for the licensed trade and the drinks, leisure and entertainments industries as well as the police and courts.

6. Similar action has been taken in Scotland where there has been particular concern about the high levels of late night alcohol-related disturbances associated with the proliferation of late night extensions in urban areas. Resulting public order problems have placed a heavy burden on police resources and other parts of the criminal justice system; and have created additional demands on the National Health Service, and in particular on Accident and Emergency departments. The Scottish Home and Health Department wrote to licensing boards and chief constables on 28 November 1988 drawing attention to the problems caused for local residents and the police by the proliferation of late night extensions (Appendix). Licensing boards were asked to reappraise their approach towards such extensions and invite the views of chief constables on the public order implications of licence applications.

RESEARCH

7. The Home Office also initiated a special research study. Six towns in South East England were chosen as the subject of an intensive study to establish the kind of areas most at risk of outbreaks of disorder; whether there are common factors to disturbances; what kind of young men are involved and what their motivation is. The towns chosen were Woking and Guildford in Surrey; Cowplain, Hants; Gravesend, Kent; Haverhill and Sudbury in Suffolk. Results will be available in spring 1989.

DRINKING IN A PUBLIC PLACE

8. In July the Home Secretary announced details of a pilot project in Coventry to test the effectiveness of a bye-law making it an offence to drink alcohol in designated streets and other public places. The bye-law came into operation on 1 November 1988 and will run for two years. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit and the Local Authority. Six other district councils (Bath, Chester, Restormel, Rushmoor, Scarborough and Stockton-on-Tees) are to take part in the experiment beginning in the New Year.

GUIDELINES FOR LICENSING JUSTICES

9. The Magistrates' Association has agreed to take the lead in drawing up guidelines to clarify the points taken into account when considering licensing applications. This will involve discussion with members of the licensed trade, brewers and the police as well as licensing justices. The aim is to have guidelines available in the Spring of 1989.

TRAINING FOR LICENSING JUSTICES

10. In March 1985, the Magistrates' Association organised a highly successful weekend seminar for Chairmen of Licensing Committees in England and Wales. Consideration is now being given to ways this might be built on and what further training might be appropriate for Chairmen of Licensing Committees. As regards training for members of licensing committees, and of magistrates generally as to their powers in petty sessions, the Lord Chancellor's Training Officer will be drawing attention to the need for training in licensing matters on his visits to Training Sub-Committees of Magistrates' Courts Committees. The Magisterial Committee of the Judicial Studies Board also has the matter under consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF LADY MASHAM'S WORKING GROUP ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

11. A number of the above measures meet recommendations made by the Masham Group's report, in particular those relating to training for licensing justices; visits to licensed premises; drinking in public places and the preparation of guidelines for licensing justices.

CHAPTER VI - THE NEXT STEPS

1. As the preceding Chapters have made clear, the Group have addressed a wide range of issues in their first year. We have secured a number of significant changes and instigated some important initiatives for future action. As we begin on our next year's work we have identified in broad terms the areas we wish to cover. These fall into two categories. Firstly, the completion and monitoring of initiatives taken in our first year, including:-

- Issue of the Interdepartmental Circular on Local Co-ordination;
- securing funding from the private and public sectors and commissioning research studies in priority areas identified by the Group;
- progress on education about alcohol by the Health Promotion bodies and in schools;
- follow-up initiatives to the 1989 Conference on Young People and Alcohol;
- the implementation of labelling alcoholic products;
- further workplace initiatives;
- drinking and driving aspects of the North Report.

We shall also continue to monitor closely all the available indicators of alcohol-related harm.

2. In addition, we propose to look in depth at the nature and extent of existing services for problem drinkers, examine particular alcohol issues as they apply to women and consider the adequacy of professional education and training about alcohol.

ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS1. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (PREVIOUSLY DHSS)

The Department of Health have responsibility for the provision and development of health and personal social services for problem drinkers and for preventing alcohol misuse by fostering sensible drinking habits through health education measures. The Department are also concerned to prevent alcohol-related violence against staff in the NHS.

2. HOME OFFICE

The Home Office are responsible for the licensing laws; broadcasting and criminal policy including policy on public order; drunkenness offences; enforcement of the drink/driving laws; crime prevention and the treatment of offenders.

3. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

The Department of Transport's principal interest is the road safety issue of drinking and driving. But they also have an interest in respect of their responsibilities for safe public transport in the widest sense - buses, trains, aviation and shipping.

4. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

The Department of Education and Science's principal concern is to ensure that school children and young people receive appropriate education and guidance on alcohol use and misuse.

5. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

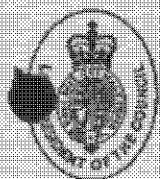
The Department of Trade and Industry have an interest in alcohol advertising. The Department also have an interest in alcohol-related accidents stemming from their general responsibility for safety in the home.

6. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

MAFF have sponsorship responsibilities within Government for the UK alcoholic drinks industry. This role entails balancing the legitimate interests of all parts of the industry itself, other affected industries and the interest of consumers.

NAT HEMPHILL: Alred May June 1979





CCP

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

28 April 1989

New Dominic
(Handwritten initials and scribbles)

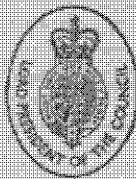
ALCOHOL MISUSE

You wrote to Allison Smith on 6 February suggesting some changes in the presentation of the Annual Report of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse, the publication of which the Prime Minister supported in principle. As my letter of 23 February reported, the Report has now been recast to take these points into account and I now enclose a copy of the latest version for the Prime Minister's approval. Subject to that, our objective is to arrange for the publication of the Annual Report to coincide with the next meeting of the Ministerial Group on 6 June. Printing the report will take 3 - 4 weeks, so it would be helpful to have your response as quickly as possible.

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosure to Colin Walters at the Home Office.

Your ever
Steve Catling
STEVE CATLING
Private Secretary

Dominic Morris Esq
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street



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cl

PRIME MINISTER

As you will recall, in September 1987 you agreed to the establishment of a Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse to review and develop the Government's strategy in this area. The Group, which I chair, completed its first year of work last November and, as the attached draft Annual Report clearly demonstrates, we have been able to address a wide range of issues in this complex field and take an impressive number of initiatives.

Our approach has been essentially pragmatic. We have looked at the overall extent and nature of alcohol misuse and selected for action the prime areas where drinking irresponsibly and to excess cause the greatest harm. Young people's drinking habits and drink/driving have been given priority in our programme to date. Moving forward in stages across a range of initiatives has helped us in achieving the co-operation of the drinks industry and other outside bodies involved.

In the light of the progress made in our first year, I and the members of the Group feel that it would be helpful to Government to build on the positive publicity which we have attracted to date by publishing this Report. We know that the reports issued by the Ministerial Group on the Misuse of Drugs have been favourably received and have reflected well on Government action in that field. A similar, attractively presented, report would, we feel, be valuable in the campaign to prevent alcohol misuse. I therefore seek your approval for publication.

We have a programme of issues for discussion already sketched out for the forthcoming year but will review the Group's future at the end of this period.

JW

30 January 1989

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON ALCOHOL MISUSE

ANNUAL REPORT

FINAL DRAFT

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON ALCOHOL MISUSE - FIRST YEAR REPORT

FOREWORD

1. Alcohol is consumed in varying quantities by some 90% of the UK adult population. In the UK

- * on average each adult aged 18 and over consumed the equivalent of 9.5 litres of pure alcohol during 1987. (1)
- * The average household spent some £8 per week on alcohol during 1986. (2)
- * As a nation, we spent nearly £17,500 million on alcohol in 1987. (3)

Alcohol provides enjoyment and even psychological benefit to many and performs a very useful function as a social lubricant. Most people who drink alcohol suffer no lasting harm. In addition the alcoholic drinks industry plays an important part in the economy with about 98,000 people (4) employed in spirit distilling, brewing and malting, and wine, cider and perry making. In 1987 the value of excise duties and VAT collected on alcoholic drinks was £6.5 billion (5) (equivalent to about 4% of Government income) and the industry's contribution to the UK Gross Domestic product was around £2.2 billion. (6) Exports, predominantly of spirits, was valued at £1.4 billion while imports (predominantly wine) were £1.00 billion - a positive trade balance of £400 million. (7)

2. This is the positive side. Set against this, the Government have become increasingly concerned about the considerable health and social harm which can be caused by the misuse of alcohol. A number of individual Departments have for some time been undertaking a range of activities to tackle alcohol misuse but increased evidence of the extent of alcohol-related harm called for sharper action with a single national focus. The Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse was established in September 1987 at the instigation of the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd MP, and the then Secretary of State for Social Services, John Moore MP. The Rt Hon John Wakeham, MP, Leader of the House and Lord President of the Council, was appointed Chairman of the Group, which has representatives from no less than 12 Government Departments and reports regularly to others.

3. The Group's terms of reference are:-

"To review and develop the Government's strategy for combating the misuse of alcohol and to oversee its continued implementation, having particular regard to:

- (i) the development of proposals for the more effective implementation of that strategy, taking into account the activities already undertaken by Government, by the alcoholic drinks industry and by voluntary and other bodies;
- (ii) the relationship between alcohol use and misuse and the effect on alcohol misuse of those factors which influence the use of alcohol in society at large;
- (iii) priorities for the future allocation and deployment of resources in the various preventive, treatment and other services and schemes which play a part in preventing, reducing or remedying alcohol misuse and its ill-effects on the family and on society more widely;
- (iv) the arrangements within and outside Government for the co-ordination, development and enforcement of policy on alcohol misuse;

and to make such recommendations from time to time as may seem appropriate."

4. In this, our first annual report, we would like to express the Group's gratitude to all the outside organisations who have helped to identify the complex issues arising from the use and misuse of alcohol in this country. The Chairman has had, and continues to have, useful informal meetings with representatives of various interests in the alcohol field - including the media and advertising industries, the churches, medical bodies, the drinks industry, the voluntary sector and criminal justice agencies. These meetings have been invaluable in providing a balanced picture. With the co-operation of all concerned the Group have covered a great deal of ground during their first year of work. This report details that progress and anticipates the areas which need to be addressed during the Group's second year.

CHAPTER I: ALCOHOL MISUSE - THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

1. The majority of the UK population drink alcohol and they do so moderately and sensibly. Unfortunately a significant minority drink in such a way as to cause harm to both themselves and others. Those who give cause for concern are not restricted to a few heavily dependent "alcoholics". They also include a much larger number of people who persistently drink more than is "good for them" or who drink at inappropriate times.

2. Misuse comes in broadly two forms:-

a. the dangerous acts which an unsuitable amount of alcohol at any one time can produce by impairing concentration and skills or reducing inhibitions, for example -

- accidents with cars or other machinery
- other accidents
- violence in the family
- other crime, particularly offences of disorder and hooliganism, occurring in or near licensed premises.

b. The long-term effects of persistent over-consumption of alcohol, for example -

- on the health of the individual (including the foetus)
- on the individual's work and employment prospects
- on the economic and social well-being of the family
- and ultimately, on the existence of the family as a unit.

EXTENT AND COSTS OF ALCOHOL MISUSE

3. It is extremely difficult to estimate the full extent and cost of alcohol misuse in this country and the accuracy of many estimates is open to question. However the following statistics and estimates from research findings give some indication of the widespread and sizeable nature of the current level of alcohol misuse:-

- an estimated 1,500,000 people in the UK, drinking at levels now regarded as definitely harmful and at least 7 million people drinking at levels now regarded by three Medical Royal Colleges as over sensible limits. (8)
- about 1,400 road accident deaths in Great Britain each year associated with excess alcohol - ie about one in four of all road deaths. (9)
- 86,625 people in Great Britain cautioned for or convicted of drunkenness. (10)
- 123,040 people convicted of drink/drive offences in the UK. (11)
- 20-30% of violent offences and disorderly offences falling short of serious violence, coming to police notice take place in or near licensed premises. A survey of public disorder outside metropolitan areas conducted in 1987 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), in consultation with the Home Office, found that heavy drinking featured in 90% of the incidents recorded. (12)
- 3,308 deaths in the UK from all cirrhosis and alcohol-related mental illness causes in 1986. (13)
- 22,578 admissions to psychiatric hospitals and units in the UK with alcohol-related diagnoses in 1986. (14)
- 7,520 discharges including deaths from non-psychiatric hospitals in England of people with a clear alcohol-related diagnosis in 1985. (15)

Researchers have estimated that the cost to society of alcohol misuse amounted to £1.8 billion in 1985. (16) The estimate is crude and conservative; it does not, for example, include the costs of hospital out-patient and day-patient care, of home accidents, fire damage or the costs of social work and the probation service.

The Group fully recognises the need for more reliable and accurate estimates of the size of the problem in the UK and is currently considering with research councils, the drinks industry and Departmental research units studies which will improve available data. However there can be no question that there is a sizeable problem which must be tackled.

CHAPTER II - THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY

1. At their first meeting in November 1987 the new Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse took the opportunity to look at material available on alcohol misuse. They felt that the main areas of concern shared by Government Departments and many outside organisations were

- the continuing rise in virtually all available indicators of alcohol-related harm to health, some of which were at their highest recorded levels;
- links between alcohol and crime: issues of particular concern were the incidence of drink-driving and evidence of a strong link between binge beer drinking by young men (18-24) and violent, disorderly conduct occurring in and around pubs, clubs, discos etc particularly at closing time;
- the drinking habits of young people: recently studies had revealed that young people (particularly boys) reported drinking alcohol at an earlier age than previously; a significant number reported drinking in pubs under age 18;
- the general public and many of the caring professions, employers, trade unionists and teachers were not well informed about the harm which alcohol misuse can cause and about what constitutes sensible drinking;
- media and advertising presentation of alcohol generally extolled its benefit without sufficient counter-balancing reference to its potentially harmful effects;

2. The Group decided that an approach targeted on areas of greatest concern was likely to be the most effective and that their first "target" should be the worrying problem of young people's drinking. On this topic, which raised a wide range of general and specific issues, the Group were greatly aided by the work which had already been undertaken by the Standing Conference on Crime Prevention Working Group on Young People and Alcohol, chaired by Baroness Masham. The Masham Group's report (17) had been published on 24 November 1987 and the Ministerial Group were able therefore to take their views into account at their second meeting in January 1988. For convenience the Masham Group's report was considered under four main headings:-

- Health Education
- Advertising and the Media
- Treatment and Facilities
- The Law

HEALTH EDUCATION

3. The Ministerial Group felt it particularly important that people should have a better understanding of how alcohol works and how to drink sensibly. They noted with approval current and planned future action by the Health Education bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who take the lead on public education. In England, the Health Education Authority (HEA) gives high priority to education on alcohol. The HEA's alcohol programme aims to reduce the harmful consequences of alcohol misuse to individuals and society, to promote sensible drinking and to develop a climate of opinion to facilitate prevention measures at national and local level. The Authority, in conjunction with the appropriate Regional Health Authority, is funding two major alcohol education campaigns. In the South West the "Understanding Alcohol" campaign has led to the establishment of 12 District alcohol co-ordinator posts and 200 primary care professional workers being trained as alcohol educators. In the North West the "Drinkwisely North West" project has produced a wide range of public education materials for national distribution; these were tested with a 500 strong "sensible drinkers panel" drawn from members of the public. The project has also surveyed public attitudes to alcohol policy measures and monitored media presentation of alcohol. The HEA has distributed 2½ million copies of public information leaflets on sensible drinking. It has also collaborated with the national voluntary agency, Alcohol Concern, and other appropriate organisations to produce guidelines for the implementation of alcohol workplace policies in the NHS, distributing more than 2,000 copies.

4. In Scotland the Scottish Health Education Group (SHEG) accords a high priority to alcohol education within its broad-based strategy of encouraging positive attitudes to health and the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. SHEG's programme in 1988-89 includes a TV and press campaign aimed at young people. It conveys the message that excessive drinking is not fashionable or trendy behaviour in the environment or lifestyle of today's young people. Health Education, including education about alcohol, is also a current priority in the development of the school curriculum and SHEG has been involved in a number of initiatives in this area. The SHEG has also published a booklet "Drink and Drugs at Work: A Manager's Guide" in association with the Institute for Supervisory Management. SHEG is supporting the Scottish Council on Alcohol's Drinkwise public education campaign in February 1989 which is also receiving grant support from the Scottish Office.

5. In Wales primary prevention is undertaken by the district health authority health education units and also by the Health Promotion Authority for Wales in association with Alcohol Concern Wales. During 1988/89 surveys have been carried out throughout Wales concerning knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to alcohol. This information is to be used for planning current and future programmes and for targetting interventions. More importantly it will provide a baseline for evaluating success over the longer term. These efforts have been concentrated on raising awareness among professionals and other decision makers about the problem and about the appropriate health promotion measures for dealing with it. Complementary programmes have been developed which include a very close working relationship with advisory teachers of local education authorities, who in the past were funded to combat drug misuse but whose remit has now been changed to encompass alcohol misuse and other health promotion issues. There has also been close liaison with local media - notably in the provision of professional advice for a major television series on sensible drinking. This will be broadcast nationwide by BBC in Spring 1990 and will provide an excellent springboard for the Wales alcohol programme. Particular attention is to be paid to the workplace, which provides an ideal location for promoting sensible drinking and helping problem drinkers. Efforts will also be made to increase the availability of low or non-alcoholic alternatives, capitalising on relationships already established by Heartbeat Wales with the retail food and drinks industry.

6. In Northern Ireland, the recently established Health Promotion Unit has been asked to give priority to the development of a health promotion programme on alcohol, following the issue by the Department of Health and Social Services of a health promotion strategy for the prevention of alcohol misuse. The programme, which is scheduled to commence in 1990-91, will provide information and advice to the general population and to those most at risk of alcohol misuse. The main objectives during 1989-90 will be to raise awareness and understanding of the problems of alcohol misuse amongst health professionals, to support the implementation of workplace policies on alcohol and to identify, in close association with those working in this area, the need for health education support materials.

7. The Group recognised the importance of education taking place in schools on the dangers of alcohol misuse. They therefore welcomed the inclusion of health education as one of the main cross-curricular themes to be covered in the National Curriculum. The Secretary of State for Education and Science has now accepted recommendations that the science curriculum should cover the risks of alcohol misuse and how they affect body processes. The Group noted that funding provided by the Department of Education and Science under Education Support Grants and the Local Education Authority Training Grants Scheme has provided guidance for schools and teachers on education about alcohol misuse. They welcomed the further efforts being made by the Department in this area. In

particular, the Department's organisation of a conference on "Young People and Alcohol" in February 1989, funded by the Scotch Whisky Association. The conference will involve a major survey of the attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of young people towards alcohol. Those attending the conference will include pupils, parents and teachers from secondary schools throughout England.

8. On the wider front the Group welcomed legislation already planned to implement an EC directive requiring pre-packaged alcohol drinks to be labelled to show the volume of alcohol they contain, and proposals to extend this requirement to dispensed drinks. Strength marking of pre-packed alcohol drinks is to be introduced by 1 May 1989 and it is hoped that the extension to dispensed drinks will also apply from that date. This extension will require public houses, bars, restaurants etc to display information on alcoholic strength of a representative sample of alcohol drinks offered for sale (up to a maximum number of 30). The Group particularly welcomed the drinks industry's commitment to publicise the new strength-marking requirements so that consumer awareness of the alcoholic strength of different drinks can be improved.

9. The Group noted that non-alcoholic and low alcohol beers and wines were a fast-growing section of the market. They welcomed proposals for legislation to restrict the use of the term "low alcohol" to drinks not exceeding 1.2% alcohol by volume. This would be a useful measure to prevent consumers from being misled by labelling and advertising into believing drinks are lower in alcohol than they actually are. They also welcomed efforts already made by the drinks industry to promote these products and make them available more widely. The Group felt that it was particularly important to have low and no-alcohol drinks readily available and attractively presented as alternatives for people to choose. They welcomed the changes in the structure of alcohol excise duties in the 1988 Budget which would encourage this sector of the market to expand further.

ADVERTISING AND THE MEDIA

10. The Group were concerned that efforts on health education would be less effective if contradictory messages were coming from the media and advertising. The Group therefore asked the BBC and IBA to review the way alcohol is presented to viewers both in individual programmes and cumulatively. Both responded favourably - broadcasters can play an invaluable role in getting across a better understanding of the damage caused by heavy drinking. The results of reviews conducted by both broadcasting organisations will be considered as part of the Group's second year programme.

11. We also asked the IBA, ASA, Cinema Advertising Association and the Cable Authority, in conjunction with the drinks and advertising industries to look again at their Codes of Practice concerning the advertising of alcohol. A positive response was received and the Codes have now been

strengthened, particularly in their requirements about advertising and young people. We intend to monitor the effects of these changes.

TREATMENT AND FACILITIES

12. The Group considered that action they were initiating at national level had to be matched by effective action at local level. They felt it important therefore to encourage all the local services and organisations with an interest in reducing alcohol misuse - to get together so that they could identify particular problems in their area, and work out a programme for dealing with them. This was not just a matter for the health services and specialist voluntary groups. The social services, education and youth services, police, probation and magistrates all had an interest. So did local businesses, the local drinks industry and many broader-based voluntary organisations. The Group felt that useful steps to reduce alcohol misuse and deal with local problems did not always need additional resources; often they could be achieved by adjusting existing provision and policies to meet local needs.

13. The Group appreciated that in some areas there was already close co-operation between local services on alcohol misuse and that many useful initiatives had already been taken. But they felt it would be helpful to bring together advice on tackling local problems with examples of good local practice in a joint Departmental Circular. Consultation on a draft Circular took place in the Summer of 1988 and the Circular is scheduled for issue in England and Wales early in 1989. Work on a similar circular to be issued by the Scottish Office is under way.

THE LAW

14. The Group rejected the view held in some quarters that the modest extension of the Licensing Laws in England and Wales proposed in the Licensing Bill 1988 was at odds with the Government's plans for tackling alcohol misuse. If people understood how to drink sensibly there was no reason why they should not buy a drink in a pub at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, particularly as they could already buy one in a supermarket. The Group does not believe that arbitrary, blanket restrictions on the adult population as a whole are an effective way of tackling the problem of alcohol misuse - the best way forward is to design measures targeted at problem or 'at risk' groups. In this context, the Group welcomed the Home Secretary's agreement to increase the maximum penalty for and to tighten the law on selling alcohol to underage persons, to make it an offence for wholesalers to sell alcohol to people under 18 and to require all alcohol sales to be supervised by persons over 18. They also noted proposals to monitor the effect of the new legislation on drinking levels through 'before and after' surveys conducted by the Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). Consideration of the results of these surveys will form part of the Group's second year programme.

15. In addition to recommending that the law on sales of alcohol to young people should be strengthened, the Masham Group proposed a number of measures to strengthen licensing law enforcement, clarify the criteria operated by licensing justices and improve training. There was also a recommendation to the Government to consider banning the drinking of alcohol by young people in a public place. Action on these recommendations was taken forward as part of a package of measures to deal with alcohol related disorder - see Chapter V.

CHAPTER III - DRINKING AND DRIVING

1. At their third and fourth meetings the Group concentrated on the important issue of drinking and driving, with particular reference to the North Report on road traffic law which was published in April.

THE PROBLEM

2. Drinking and driving above the legal limit has killed around 1,000 people each year. In addition, nearly 400 pedestrians killed each year in road accidents are over the legal limit for drivers. The cost to society of these total casualties is about £700M in Great Britain.

TACKLING THE PROBLEM

The Government's anti-drink/driving campaign

3. The campaign against drinking and driving is managed by the Department of Transport. They have developed a three-pronged approach aimed at changing underlying public attitudes:

- getting the issue reported and discussed by the media as news and current affairs;
- encouraging private sector participation in the campaign;
- paid advertising.

4. The media have responded well to this in that drinking and driving is now regularly treated as news and current affairs and is covered in feature articles, editorial comment and in some television and radio programmes.

5. The Department have helped in building an alliance of interested parties including government, police, brewers, landlords, the retail trade, motoring organisations, insurers, the churches and the medical profession. Together there has been success in raising the level of general interest in the drink driving issue. An example of the co-operation this alliance has produced was the launch in 1987 by the Brewers' Society of their 'Wheelwatch' campaign designed to promote the availability, display and sale in pubs of "safe drinks for drivers". The brewing industry are spending large sums of money (some £25m this year) on the development and marketing of low and non-alcoholic beers. This is now the most rapidly rising sector of the drinks market.

6. Paid publicity has focussed on two or three campaigns each year comprising poster advertisements and television commercials. Drinking and driving is a year round problem - over the limit drinking is more prevalent during the summer months with their long light evenings - and the strategy in

recent years has been to develop a year round campaign with phased publicity peaks, rather than the previous concentration of effort in the pre-Christmas period. Paid advertising remains a powerful weapon. It is expensive and is not the only way to capture attention. The same audience can be reached more effectively by generating media interest.

7. The Department carries out regular monitoring exercises to track the effectiveness of its campaigns. Research shows that the climate of opinion is changing significantly. The most encouraging measure is that drink driving deaths fell below 1,000 in 1987.

8. There is evidence of a long term continuing reduction in the amount of drink and driving. Responses to survey questions indicate that the number of people admitting to driving after drinking has been significantly reduced in the last ten years. Surveys show a greater public awareness of the problem and a hardening of attitudes against drinking drivers. Surveys of self-reported behaviour in 1987 suggest that the incidence of driving while above the limit has fallen over the past ten years from 1.7 million occasions per week to about half that level. This is the first time in ten years that research has suggested that fewer than 1 million above-the-limit driving occasions per week occur.

9. Following the success of, and public support for, roadside surveys of the actual incidence of drinking and driving (carried out in Spring 1988 in Warwickshire and Sussex) the Department now plans to conduct similar surveys on a regular basis so as to allow more accurate reporting of the problem. The surveys, which involved over 2,600 drivers, confirmed that the highest risk group are men in their 20's who have usually been drinking beer or lager in the pub. This is the main target group for the Department's paid publicity. Participation in the surveys involved a voluntary breath test. This showed that alcohol was present in 17% of drivers; 1.7% were over the legal limit. Although the percentage over the limit was encouragingly low it still represents a potentially very large number of drive/drive occasions. If all the 44 people concerned were to drive while over the limit just twice every week of the year, they would between them be responsible for some 4,500 occasions when they significantly put other people's lives - and their own - at risk.

ENFORCEMENT

10. Underpinning the anti-drink drive campaign has been an increasingly high level of enforcement activity by the police. In 1987 they carried out nearly 400,000 roadside breath tests, nearly 30% more than the previous year, leading to over 125,000 convictions - up 5,000 on the previous year.

11. At present, the police may stop any vehicle at random and may then administer a breath test if they have reasonable cause to suspect the driver has been drinking. has been involved in an accident or has committed a moving traffic offence. The view of the Association of Chief Police Officers

(ACPO) has for many years been that their powers to stop and breath test drivers are adequate. They have recently suggested a change in the law so as to allow them "unfettered discretion" to stop and test, without satisfying the 'reasonable cause' requirements. They have not asked specifically for 'random breath testing' although complete discretion would allow random testing. The Government is giving careful consideration to ACPO's proposals.

HIGH RISK OFFENDERS

12. While noting the success of the anti-drink drive campaign and the support provided by the police and the public, the Group have been concerned about the threat posed by drivers who may have a drink problem in the medical sense. At the third meeting the Group discussed the Department of Transport's existing scheme for medical assessment of 'high risk offenders' before the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Centre return their driving licences after a period of disqualification. High risk offenders (HRO) are presently defined as those who have been convicted twice within 10 years for drink driving offences at two and a half times or more over the limit,* or for twice refusing to submit to a breath test. The Group took the view that tougher action was called for in respect of this category of offenders and they asked the Department of Transport to consider widening the scope of the HRO scheme. Having completed a review of the effectiveness of the scheme, and the resource implications of extending it, the Department proposed that in future it should apply to any driver convicted just once at two and a half times the limit, or for refusing a breath test. Furthermore it proposed that convicted drivers should be required to pay both for the administrative work involved in dealing with their application for return of their licence and for the medical examination which they are required to undergo. The Group endorsed this proposed extension of the scheme and asked the Department to monitor its effectiveness. The Group noted that the extended scheme should lead to medical assessment of up to 40,000 offenders each year, in due course, if drink driving is not reduced.

* The limit is 80 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood (80 mg/100ml). 2½ times the limit is therefore 200 mg/100 ml

ROAD TRAFFIC LAW REVIEW

13. During the year the Group considered the North Report on Road Traffic Law and welcomed in particular the recommendations for dealing with drinking and driving. They recognised the need for full consultation on the report's proposals in this important area but stressed the need for early decisions, followed by legislation as soon as possible.

14. The Group identified the proposed new offence of causing death by careless driving after drinking as a key proposal. Other proposals to which they attached importance were the recommendation to end insurance against disqualification for drinking and driving, which they asked should receive immediate consideration; and the recommendation that the penalties for failing to stop at or report an accident should be increased. They endorsed the North Committee's view that there was a clear link between drinking and this increasing practice. The Group also saw potential in initiatives to prevent further offending, such as retraining and retesting, rehabilitation schemes and selective use of bail conditions to prevent those on drink driving charges from driving while awaiting trial.

15. The Secretary of State for Transport announced progress in the Government's consideration of the North Report recommendations on 26 July 1988 in a Parliamentary Written Answer, when he said that Ministers had accepted the Review's basic conclusion that a way must be found to ensure that convictions can be secured and that appropriate penalties are available to the Courts for people who drink and drive with tragic consequences. Discussions are now well advanced with the insurance industry about bringing to an end the offering of policies insuring against disqualification.

16. The recommendation that the penalty points for failure to stop or report an accident should be increased has now been implemented. An Order increasing the range from 4-9 to 8-10 will come into force on 1 March 1989. The Government's overall conclusions on the North Committee proposals will be announced early in 1989.

CHAPTER IV - ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE

1. At the fifth meeting, the Group looked at the problem of alcohol in the workplace. Alcohol has a fundamental impact on industry and commerce - not only in terms of the costs of reduced health and safety but also reduced efficiency, reduced productivity and poor performance. The workplace is an important forum in which much can be done to prevent alcohol misuse and deal with its consequences.

2. As with general data on alcohol misuse, obtaining precise statistics on the state of the effect of alcohol misuse on the workplace has been difficult. However, one estimate (based on research done in England and Wales in 1985) showed that the cost to industry of sick absence alone due to alcohol misuse was over £700 million annually.

3. The Health and Safety Commission and Executive have an interest in the effect of alcohol misuse upon workplace accidents and the health of employees. The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service has an interest in the implications for industrial relations of alcohol misuse.

THE WORK OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE

4. The Group shared the concern of the Commission and the Executive about the effect of alcohol misuse on industrial health and safety. The consumption of alcohol contributes to a significant number of accidents at work. In some occupations the consumption of even a small amount of alcohol can pose a particularly high risk to the drinker and to others - train drivers and pilots are two examples. The Executive has always maintained a major role in relation to alcohol misuse at work. Its activities include the publication in 1981 of a guidance booklet "The Problem Drinker at Work", the advisory work of Executive field staff, investigations into particular incidents and involvement in research projects.

WORK OF THE ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE UNIT, EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT

5. The Group welcomed the Employment Department's Group decision to set up a special unit primarily to look at the wider implications of alcohol misuse and the workplace. As its first task, the Unit is producing a leaflet for dissemination to all small and medium-sized firms in early 1989, encouraging employers to take a positive approach towards tackling alcohol abuse at work. The leaflet is designed to persuade employers that they have everything to gain from taking action now to combat the ill-effects of alcohol misuse. The Unit is liaising closely with the UK Health Promotion bodies and other voluntary and private organisations who undertake a wide range of education and advice activities especially geared to the workplace setting.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

6. The Group took a particular interest in the arrangements made for Government's own employees in the Civil Service. Alcohol misuse at work has long been of concern to management and the trades unions in the Civil Service. In 1982 both sides agreed to a joint policy statement on tackling alcohol misuse at the workplace. The objective of the statement is to ensure that civil servants at all levels and in all occupational groups understand well the dangers of alcohol misuse and to encourage positive action where problems exist. Each government department has used the statement as a basis for determining guidance to their staff on practice and procedures for dealing with the problem. The thrust of the initiative is primarily to encourage the problem drinker to face up to his/her situation and accept that he/she may need expert advice and treatment to help recover and lead a healthy and useful life.

7. Departments review their arrangements under the policy at regular intervals and remind their staff of departmental procedures. The Office for the Minister for the Civil Service (OMCS) monitors and reports to departments the incidence of recorded problems of alcohol misuse in the Civil Service. It also keeps in touch with developments by subscribing to leading organisations in this field and disseminates news of advances and best practice to personnel and welfare staff in departments. The Group welcomed OMCS plans to conduct a thorough review of existing policy and guidance to departments early in 1989.

CHAPTER V: ALCOHOL AND DISORDER

1. The question of the links between alcohol and crime has been exercising the minds of researchers for some time. A study to clarify the nature of the association between heavy drinking and offending is one of the research projects included on a 'menu' of projects drawn up by the Group for discussion with research councils and the industry.

2. But whatever the research needs, nobody who walks around the centres of many towns and cities in the late evening can have any doubt about the influence of excessive drinking on rowdiness and violence or the climate of fear and menace it creates. A survey of public disorder outside metropolitan areas conducted in 1987 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in consultation with the Home Office found that heavy drinking featured in 90% of the incidents recorded.

3. Prior to the establishment of the Ministerial Group, the Home Office, and others, had already been acting on this issue. In particular, a 1986 Report to the Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention "Violence Associated with Licensed Premises" had examined the problem and made recommendations as to the action which might be taken. Several local projects, including multi-agency crime prevention demonstration projects in Coventry and Newport (Gwent) had been established to carry forward recommendations in the Report. Following consideration of the issue by the Group, further advice on crime prevention measures with details of effective local action were included in the joint Department Circular (see Chapter II).

4. In July, following publication of the ACPO Survey and Royal Assent to the Licensing Act 1988 (see Chapter II), Home Office proposals for handling alcohol-related disorder were considered by the Group. The proposals (since implemented) incorporated action to secure operational improvements to the police response to incidents of disorder outside metropolitan areas and to secure speedier court hearings for those accused of committing offences in the course of sudden outbreaks of hooliganism to demonstrate the determination of the agencies involved to act firmly against them. But a number of measures were directed specifically at licensing law enforcement and other alcohol-related issues.

LICENSING LAW ENFORCEMENT

5. At the end of July the Group's Chairman, the Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor held a meeting with interested bodies including the Magistrates' Association and the drinks, leisure and entertainments industry. Meetings also took place with representatives of ACPO. These meetings revealed a broad consensus about action to tackle alcohol and disorder through better management of premises and tougher enforcement of the licensing laws. Guidance was issued to the police and courts on 5 August (Appendix). This draws

attention to the wide powers available to prevent and curb disorder, infringements of the licensing law and drunkenness; the new powers to object to and revoke licenses at any licensing session with examples of possible grounds; the usefulness of visits to licensed premises by licensing justices and policy with examples of points to note; enforcement of the law on purchase of alcohol by under 18s (in public houses and other outlets) including reference to identity cards. It also provides information about crime prevention measures and exclusion orders in respect of persons convicted of violence or threatening violence on licensed premises. Copies of the guidance were sent to representative organisations for the licensed trade and the drinks, leisure and entertainments industries as well as the police and courts.

6. Similar action has been taken in Scotland where there has been particular concern about the high levels of late night alcohol-related disturbances associated with the proliferation of late night extensions in urban areas. Resulting public order problems have placed a heavy burden on police resources and other parts of the criminal justice system; and have created additional demands on the National Health Service, and in particular on Accident and Emergency departments. The Scottish Home and Health Department wrote to licensing boards and chief constables on 28 November 1988 drawing attention to the problems caused for local residents and the police by proliferation of late night extensions (Appendix). Licensing boards were asked to reappraise their approach towards such extensions and invite the views of chief constables on the public order implications of licence applications.

RESEARCH

7. The Home Office also initiated a special research study. Six towns in South East England were chosen as the subject of an intensive study to establish the kind of areas most at risk of outbreaks of disorder; whether there are common factors to disturbances; what kind of young men are involved and what their motivation is. The towns chosen were Woking and Guildford in Surrey; Cowplains, Hants; Gravesend, Kent; Haverhill and Sudbury in Suffolk. Results will be available in early 1989.

DRINKING IN A PUBLIC PLACE

8. In July the Home Secretary announced details of a pilot project in Coventry to test the effectiveness of a bye-law making it an offence to drink alcohol in designated streets and other public places. The bye-law came into operation on 1 November 1988 and will run for two years. Its effectiveness will be monitored by Home Office Crime Prevention Unit and the local authority. Six other district councils (Bath, Chester, Restormel, Rushmoor, Scarborough and Stockton-on-Tees) are to take part in the project beginning in the new year.

GUIDELINES FOR LICENSING JUSTICES

9. The Magistrates Association has agreed to take the lead in drawing up guidelines to clarify the points taken into account when considering licensing applications. This will involve discussion with members of the licensed trade, brewers and the police as well as licensing justices. The aim is to have guidelines available in the Spring of 1989.

TRAINING FOR LICENSING JUSTICES

10. In March 1985, the Magistrates' Association organised a highly successful week-end seminar for Chairmen of Licensing Committees in England and Wales. Consideration is now being given to ways this might be built on and what further training might be appropriate for Chairmen of Licensing Committees. As regards training for members of licensing committees, and of magistrates generally as to their powers in petty sessions, the Lord Chancellor's Training Officer will be drawing attention to the need for training in licensing matters on his visits to Training Sub-Committees of Magistrates' Courts Committees. The Magisterial Committee of the Judicial Studies Board also has the matter under consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF LADY MASHAM'S WORKING GROUP ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

11. The Group noted with approval that a number of the above measures met recommendations made by the Masham Group's report, in particular those relating to training for licensing justices; visits to licensed premises; drinking in public places and the preparation of guidelines/a Code of Practice for licensing justices.

CHAPTER VI - THE NEXT STEPS

1. As the preceding Chapters have made clear, the Group have addressed a wide range of issues in their first year. We have secured a number of significant changes and instigated some important initiatives for future action. As we begin on our next year's work we have identified in broad terms the areas we wish to cover. These fall into two categories. Firstly, the completion and monitoring of initiatives taken in our first year, including:-

- issue of the Joint Circular on Local Co-ordination;
- securing funding from the private and public sectors and commissioning research studies in priority areas identified by the Group;
- progress on education about alcohol by the Health Promotion bodies and in schools;
- follow-up initiatives to the 1989 Conference on Young People and Alcohol;
- the implementation of Labelling Alcoholic products;
- further Workplace Initiatives;
- drinking and driving aspects of the North report.

We shall also continue to monitor closely all the available indicators of alcohol-related harm.

2. In addition, we propose to look in depth at the nature and extent of existing services for problem drinkers, examine particular alcohol issues as they apply to women and consider the adequacy of professional education and training about alcohol.

ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS1. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (PREVIOUSLY DHSS)

The Department of Health has responsibility for the provision and development of health and personal social services for problem drinkers and for preventing alcohol misuse by fostering sensible drinking habits through health education measures. The Department is also concerned to prevent alcohol-related violence against staff in the NHS.

2. HOME OFFICE

The Home Office is responsible for the licensing laws; broadcasting and criminal policy including policy on public order; drunkenness offences; enforcement of the drink driving laws; crime prevention and the treatment of offenders.

3. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

The Department of Transport's principal interest is the road safety issue of drinking and driving. But it also has an interest in respect of its responsibilities for safe public transport in the widest sense - buses, trains, aviation and shipping.

4. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

The Department of Education and Science's principal concern is to ensure that school children and young people receive appropriate education and guidance on alcohol use and misuse.

5. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The Department of Trade and Industry have an interest in alcohol advertising. The Department also have an interest in alcohol related accidents stemming from their general responsibility for safety in the home.

6. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

MAFF has sponsorship responsibilities within Government for the UK alcoholic drinks industry. This role entails the analysis of issues with implications for the industry where Government has an input either domestically or internationally with the aim of finding solutions which balance the legitimate interests of all parts of the industry itself, other affected industries and the interest of consumers.

7. TREASURY AND HM CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Treasury have a general policy interest in respect of alcoholic drink taxation. Customs have specific responsibility for indirect taxation on alcohol drinks including both detailed policy considerations and administration of the appropriate duties.

8. DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

The DE interest in alcohol misuse arises mainly from its responsibility for industrial relations legislation and health and safety at work. Alcohol misuse by an employee can lead to poor work performance and absenteeism, which can in turn involve the employee in his/her company's disciplinary procedure and ultimately to dismissal. Such misuse can also contribute to accidents at work, with which the Health and Safety Commission/Executive are concerned; it may also be relevant to other HSC/E concerns such as assaults on public service staff, or public safety.

9. DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The Sport and Recreation Division which works to the Minister for Sport is responsible for questions relating to the sponsorship of sport, including that provided by the alcohol industry. It also has a major interest in the relationship between alcohol and football hooliganism although the Home Office is the lead Department for this issue.

10. OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE

The OMCS has an interest in the effect of alcohol abuse on the efficiency and conduct of the Civil Service in the UK.

11. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

The Ministry of Defence has an interest in policies affecting the control of alcohol and the treatment of its misuse in relation to service personnel.

12. NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTTISH AND WELSH OFFICES

In relation to their own territories the Northern Ireland, Scottish and Welsh Offices deal with aspects of alcohol policy covered by the Departments listed above except where these Departments have responsibilities which extend throughout the United Kingdom, in particular the Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Treasury and Customs and Excise.

NOTE

There will also be four further appendices to the Annual Report which are not being circulated at this time. These are:-

- a) MGAM Press Releases
- b) Home Office Circular on public disorder
- c) Scottish Office Circular on public disorder
- d) References

1 February 1989

ALCOHOL MISUSE

Two reports on this subject are due to be published in the next month or so:

- i. the first annual report of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse - John Wakeham has written seeking your agreement to this;
- ii. a Home Office research paper on drinking and disorder - this was commissioned at the Cabinet discussion of rural violence last June.

The appearance of these two publications will stimulate public debate. It will be important to ensure that the various recommendations are effectively pulled together, so that the Government can be seen to be acting in a co-ordinated and decisive fashion. The focus for co-ordination should be the Wakeham group.

Report of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse

The Report outlines the steps which are being taken in a number of areas to tackle the problem of alcohol misuse. The most eye-catching are:

- a. increases in funding for health education work, particularly among young people;
- b. abolition of insurance against disqualification for drink driving.

(a) and (b) have already been announced.

The report usefully sets alcohol misuse in context. It opens by pointing out that 90% of the adult population drink alcohol, mostly without any ill effects. By European standards average alcohol consumption per head of the population in the UK is low: France, Germany, Netherlands, Italy and Spain all have higher per capita figures.

But alcohol is often a factor in violent crime, which is rising. And alcohol-related public disorder appears to be more of a problem in the UK than anywhere else in the EC.

Home Office Study on Drinking and Disorder

This study aims to throw some light on the growing problem of public disorder in non-metropolitan areas. Though often described as the problem of 'rural violence', the study shows that most of the incidents which caught the headlines last summer broke out in towns or other centres of entertainment. A summary is at Annex A.

The study looked at six areas: Sudbury, Haverhill, Woking, Guildford, Gravesend and Havant. In all cases the number of incidents involving violence against the person had increased since 1983 (see table at Annex B). The study found:

- i. that weekend drinking in pubs is the principle form of entertainment for the young, especially males;
- ii. that regular weekend drinking in pubs is common among 16 and 17 year olds;
- iii. that most of those who become involved in disorder are males in the 18 to 24 year old age group;
- iv. but that under-age drinkers are proportionately more likely than older ones to become involved in disorder;

- v. that trouble most often occurs in the hour after closing time ie. between 11am and midnight at weekends;
- vi. that trouble often happens outside fast food outlets.

The study throws some light on the typical participant in weekend disorder:

'He was characteristically young, employed in a low status job, went drinking in male groups and seemed to be inspired by a search for entertainment or weekend distraction rather than by any more serious motivation.'

It is interesting that the most detailed study of the characteristics of football hooligans (by Leicester University) identified the same type. While the popular press like to draw attention to incidents involving 'yuppies' and well-educated hooligans, they appear to be in the minority.

The report identifies a number of areas for action:

- i. It suggests that the pattern of police shiftworking at weekends is not ideal - police shifts commonly change around 10pm. The report likens this to a shuffling of air traffic controllers at peak travel times. It suggests that more use of overtime, to enable the same policemen to see through the 'danger hour' of 11pm to midnight, could be more cost-effective than additional police numbers with the present shift patterns.
- ii. Low alcohol drinks need to be promoted more effectively, to capture the youth market. The report recognises that the brewing industry has begun moving in this direction.

- iii. It suggests a staggering of closing times for licensed premises, as is common on the Continent.
- iv. It presses for tighter measures to prevent under-age drinking in pubs. There are currently local experiments involving the use of ID cards. These could be expanded without the introduction of a national identity card (identification is regularly demanded in the United States, although there is no national identity card there).
- v. It suggests that pubs might be required to have a special licence to run a disco; at present this is not necessary, and there is no limit on the numbers who can be packed in.
- vi. It argues for local initiatives involving the community and the police. The focal points for outbreaks of public disorder are usually well known in any area, and can be the target for effective local action.

Comment

The Home Office study sheds useful light on the characteristics of those involved in drunk and disorderly behaviour, and on the nature of street brawling. But it gets no closer than anyone else to analysing the causes of increased public disorder associated with alcohol. This is not a criticism: it is extremely difficult to find a satisfactory explanation.

Common arguments are:

- i. too much money in the pockets of the young;
- ii. too much violence on television;
- iii. the effect of 1960s thinking on the attitudes of parents and teachers.

All of these probably play a part. But by themselves they do not explain why we have a problem in the UK which is not found to anything like the same extent in France or Germany where:

- i. they have a higher living standard than the UK;
- ii. there is just as much violence on television;
- iii. they were also influenced by the ideas of the 1960s (though these do not seem to have affected education in the same way).

If we cannot ultimately say why British youths with limited horizons seek excitement through binge drinking, we can focus on the pattern of social behaviour in the UK. The report rightly focusses on the peculiarly British habit of drinking without eating.

Action could be taken via the licensing system. Some police forces have stressed the need for tighter enforcement of the special licensing rules which require food to be available in premises open till 1am or 2am. Could this be extended to all licensed premises and effectively enforced? After all, the brewers see food as one of the main growth areas.

The fast food chains could be asked to help. McDonalds, for example, do not want brawling or litter outside their

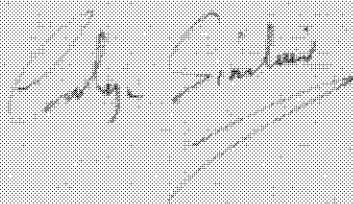
premises. (They have said that they would be happy to supply and clear litter bins, but have been warned off by local authorities arguing that rubbish clearance is a direct labour matter.) Fast food shops could be asked to consider closing before 11pm. This might be a difficult commercial decision; but if they become a focus for persistent late night noise, they can be compelled to close earlier under existing by-laws. It will be harder to influence individual Chinese take-aways. But a concerted effort by the Government and the police, with the by-laws in the background, could make it clear that it is not in the interests of fast food shops to be regularly linked with street brawling.

Action on these two fronts would be complementary. A growth in sales of food in pubs would reduce demand for take-away food after 11pm. The take-away shops might respond by closing earlier. They might find a new source of profits in supplying the pubs with food. If all police forces undertook the close liaison which some have established with licensees and licensing magistrates - for example, in Barnet and Brighton - the result could be pleasanter places for the young to eat and drink, with less overcrowding and tighter enforcement of the landlords' obligations not to serve those who are under-age or drunk. Late night fast food shops might well dwindle as a focus for lingering and disorder. Without such a focus, the British climate might do the rest.

Recommendation

- (i) Agree that the first annual report of the Wakeham Group should be published. Careful presentation will be needed to put Government action in the best possible light.

- (ii) Ask the Wakeham Group to carry forward the recommendations in the Home Office Research Study, notably on police shift patterns, ID cards for young drinkers, special licenses for disco pubs and further ways of promoting low alcohol drinks.
- (iii) Ask the Wakeham Group to consider whether the licensing system could be used to help speed up the trend towards eating and drinking in the same place. This should be combined with an approach to the fast food chains to seek their active help.



CAROLYN SINCLAIR

PRIME MINISTER

ALCOHOL MISUSE

The Lord President seeks agreement to publication of the Annual Report of the work of the Group he is chairing on Alcohol Misuse (draft at flag A). I recognise that it is a summary of what has happened over the past year and not an action-plan for the future, but it fails to get across effectively that the Government has, in Mr. Wakeham's words "taken an impressive number of initiatives". I think the problem is largely one of presentation: the rather dense text needs illustration and a glossier surround to sustain interest; but it is also a question of language which is couched too much in terms of "the group has noted" or "the group has welcomed" rather than in positive action-orientated language reflecting what the Government has achieved.

At flag B I attach a note by Carolyn Sinclair on Mr. Wakeham's Report and on a Home Office document prepared after last year's Cabinet discussion on rural violence. Her note is well worth a read and it has imaginative ideas on future avenues of work for the Group.

Subject to my comments above on Mr. Wakeham's Report, content for me to minute out on the basis of Carolyn Sinclair's recommendations contained in her note?

JM
→
DOMINIC MORRIS

3 February 1989

Yes - Carolyn *out*



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

6 February 1989

ALCOHOL MISUSE

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Lord President's minute of 30 January covering a draft of the report which he proposes to issue reflecting the first year of work by the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse which he chairs.

The Prime Minister is in principle content for a report to be published. She feels that careful presentation will be needed to put Government action in the best possible light. She has noted that the Lord President plans to ensure that the report is attractively presented. She would also be grateful if the Lord President could look again at the language of the text. She recognises that it is a summary of what has happened over the past year, not action planned for the future, but feels that the language has been couched too much in terms of the Group "noted" or "welcomed" measures passively rather than conveying the impression that the Government has been active in tackling the problems. As the Lord President says in his minute, the Government, through his Group, has taken an impressive number of initiatives and the Prime Minister hopes that with some changes to the drafting of the text of the report this could shine through more clearly.

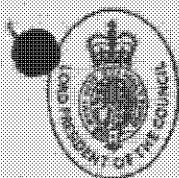
The Prime Minister was also interested to see over the weekend a summary of the Home Office study "Drinking and Disorder" prepared after the Cabinet discussion on rural violence last June. She feels this contains a significant number of imaginative ideas. She would therefore be very grateful if, in its work over the coming year, the Ministerial Group could carry forward the recommendations in its research study, notably on police shift patterns, ID cards for young drinkers, special licences for disco pubs and further ways of promoting low alcohol drinks.

She would also be grateful if the Group could consider whether the licensing system can be used to speed up the trend towards eating and drinking in the same place, combined with an approach to fast food chains to seek their active help.

A copy of this letter goes to Philip Mawer in the Home Office.

Ms. Alison Smith,
Lord President's Office.

(DOMINIC MORRIS)



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

23 February 1989

New Promise

ALCOHOL MISUSE

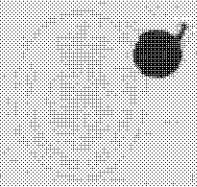
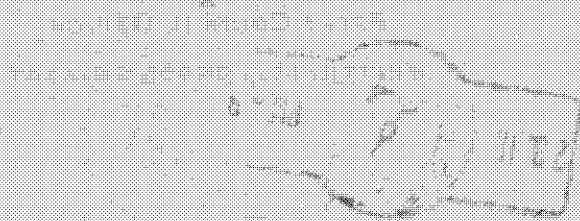
Thank you for your letter of 6 February to Alison Smith. I am writing now to confirm that the Annual Report of the Ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse is being redrafted on the lines the Prime Minister has suggested. We shall be taking advice on presentational aspects from press and publicity specialists, and I expect to send across a revised version shortly.

I can also confirm that the Lord President has commissioned a paper on the Home Office study "Drinking and Disorder" for the next meeting of the Ministerial Group on 7 April. I understand that action to implement some of the recommendations is already under way in the Home Office, co-ordinated by Mr Patten's office. But there will be scope for following things up through the Group and dealing, for example, with points concerning the promotion of low alcohol drinks and action by fast-food chains.

A copy of this letter goes to Philip Mawer in the Home office.

Steve Catling
STEVE CATLING
Private Secretary

Dominic Morris Esq
PS/Prime Minister
10 Downing Street



CHAPTER VII

Summary and Discussion

The Hayes report, the results of which were made public in June 1988, gave rise to wide public concern. It established that the police were experiencing problems in policing disorder in non-metropolitan areas, especially disorder relating to alcohol consumption. Throughout the summer of 1988 both press and TV were full of accounts of 'rural violence' and of 'lager louts'. The phrase 'rural violence' was an especially emotive one. It created a picture of mythical, tranquil, rural England, that green and pleasant land, suddenly prey to forms of mob violence and loutishness which had been thought to belong essentially to the corrupt city. The Hayes report called for more detailed study to understand the nature of the phenomenon it recorded. The Home Secretary announced it would be carried out. This report records that research.

The first point to emerge is that the phenomenon cannot accurately be described as 'rural violence'. The incidents recorded by Hayes came from 'non-metropolitan areas' and as Map 1, Chapter I shows, non-metropolitan England and Wales is a very wide area indeed. It does indeed include the whole of rural England and Wales, but it also includes major cities such as Oxford, Nottingham, Plymouth, Brighton, Colchester, Stratford-on-Avon and those great swathes of prosperous, densely settled, semi-rural semi-urban areas so characteristic of the prosperous south-east. Areas such as the Slough triangle, the Medway

towns, the Thames Valley, Havant, can no longer reasonably be described simply as 'rural'. They are among the most densely settled areas in Europe.

Chapter II of this study describes a 'locational analysis' of the 251 incidents which occurred in England and Wales in 1987 and were recorded in the Hayes report. No less than 118 of these incidents came from areas classified as 'mixed town and country with some industry' or 'higher status growth areas', another 34 came from cities or traditional manufacturing areas, 23 from commuting or suburban areas, 15 from seaside resort or retirement areas. Only 58 came from genuine 'more rural areas'; this despite the fact that the criteria for inclusion in the Hayes report list included 'difficulty in bringing up police re-inforcements' which would tend to bias the list to include more disorder incidents in remote areas.

Inevitably, many of the high-growth, mixed town and country areas where non-metropolitan disorder occurred are in the South of England. The North of England is more characteristically divided into metropolitan areas of traditional heavy manufacturing and more remote rural areas. It is not surprising that the 'non metropolitan' incidents mapped by Hayes cluster in the south.

In order to describe the nature of incidents of disorder or violence, three paired sites were selected for further study; one of each pair a major 'trouble-site' in the Hayes data, the other as near as possible a match in terms of socio-demographic variables. Chapter III describes the kind of disorder found in the three pairs of sites studied. Contrary to expectation, disorder was as prevalent in some of the

'control' or 'matched' sites as in the selected 'trouble-sites'; and the position in some 'trouble-site' towns had improved between 1987 (when the Hayes data originated) and the summer of 1988 (when this study was carried out). It seems that the possibility of disorder is latent in many of the areas selected by our locational analysis.

Whether such disorder erupts in one particular town, village, or entertainment centre rather than another appears to depend on a complex amalgam of reasons including the history and reputation of the place, the size or sudden growth of the young male population, the siting and geography of entertainment and fast-food outlets and the success or otherwise of the police in setting reasonably orderly 'rules of the game'.

Both in Chapter III and Chapter IV some accounts were given of the typical weekend drinking habits of the young. Disorder is not so much found in licensed outlets themselves, but in the streets afterwards. Young people leave pubs en masse at the same hour, emerge onto the streets still looking for further entertainment, cluster at fast-food outlets or at other gathering points and are at this point excitable tinder, ready for any spark which may cause quarrels or violence. Both the survey and group discussion data presented at Chapter IV showed that weekend drinking (sometimes quite heavy drinking) is a routine social habit among the young. Even among 16 to 18 year olds resident in typical entertainment centres, a third are using the pubs on a Friday or Saturday night. "Going out to the pub" is quite simply what young people do on a weekend evening, to meet others and to enjoy themselves.

Only a minority of these youngsters become participants in disorder and/or violence. Is there anything to distinguish participants from observers and non-participants? This question is discussed in Chapter IV and it is shown that participants in disorder are more likely to have unskilled jobs or to be unemployed (the group discussions suggest sometimes voluntarily) and to have left school at sixteen. These are young men who have not yet found their role in society. They may not have enough money to go on to night-clubs after their evening in the pub (even if they exist in their vicinity); they cluster outside take-aways, unwilling for the evening to end, still looking for excitement. It is these gatherings which are the characteristic focus of disorder. Since it is often said that a spell in the armed services might be good for possible trouble-makers, it is worth noting that 'squaddies' or soldiers are often themselves the source of trouble.

Some possible strategies for prevention are discussed in Chapter V, which concentrates on entertainment patterns and in Chapter VI which concentrates on the role of police. At Chapter V, it is suggested more could be done by planning authorities, brewery managers and managers of fast-food chains to control the siting of outlets so 'congestion sites' are not created. It is also suggested that the 'disco pub' or 'youth pub' may be a particular source of excitement and that perhaps consideration should be given to changing the rules under which these establishments operate. At present they are far less controlled than establishments with late night music and dancing licences.

The discussion of police strategies at Chapter VI makes clear the extreme difficulty of the police task. There is some tentative

evidence that they may have difficulty in responding in proportionate strength to disorder incidents in the hour or so after pub closing. But it is argued that the most successful strategy appears to be early intervention at a low level before really excitable and disorderly crowds build up, rather than late intervention in strength. In areas where 'the rules of the game' have already become very lax and even early intervention would be difficult without back-up, such back-up could possibly be provided on a temporary basis until the habits of orderly public behaviour are re-established. The group discussions suggest that such early intervention strategies might not be unpopular with the mass of young people. It was further observed that problems are caused for the police by the switch in shift in the middle of Friday and Saturday evenings; this makes it difficult for a total police operation over the whole evening to be closely planned.

It is stressed that these suggestions for police strategy are inevitably tentative, based as they are on one month's observations and discussions. The police themselves have a great wealth of experience in these matters. They have successfully policed the traditional Friday night and Saturday night pub crawls and heavy drinking of Northern industrial towns for generations. The present study suggests that they have already developed expertise and techniques, in areas such as Cowplain and Woking, which can be successful in dealing with areas which had become very troublesome. There need to be more detailed case-studies and exchanges of information and techniques as to how to deal with this classic and difficult problem, which is essentially a problem of policing entertainment centres.

Patterns of weekend drinking

But the problem of non-metropolitan disorder is not one with which the police alone can be expected to deal. This report has shown that most of these disorderly incidents are intimately connected with the drinking patterns of the young and with patterns of pub-going at the weekend. Some incidents fall outside this pattern - the disturbance at a suburban party; the incident away from normal entertainment centre gathering points - but both police message pads and observational data show that the majority of disorderly incidents are connected with weekend entertainment patterns.

This British pattern of weekend entertainment drinking is not a new pattern; nor is it likely quickly to change. As one senior police inspector, with experience in North of England towns in the fifties and sixties, observed during the course of this study - "Surely 'twas ever thus". The new salience of the problem of entertainment centre disorder is that it is not now a feature solely of industrial areas or large entertainment centres. Movements of work, of population, of prosperity, mean that similar patterns of drinking and entertainment have spread to newly prosperous and populated areas, including those in the South of England, still thought of as 'the country'.

Possible policy initiatives

Any solution of the problem is thus at least as much a matter for social policy generally as it is for the police. Several useful reports have recently been published on alcohol policy and many useful initiatives have been put in hand. Not all will be discussed here, but a few, particularly relevant to the disorder problem, will be briefly

discussed:-

(a) Reducing alcohol consumption by the young

Many have argued that the major need is to reduce alcohol consumption, particularly by young males. But this report has reminded us of the centrality of 'going out to the pub' in the life of young people. Whatever the price of beer it is unlikely that youngsters will stop the habit of Friday and Saturday nights out. The pub is where they meet their friends; going to the pub is a mass social habit. The quickest and most effective strategy to reduce alcohol consumption among this age group would probably be to ensure that lower alcohol drinks (and non-alcoholic drinks) were more freely available in pubs; and more fashionable. Low alcohol and non-alcohol beers need both to be cheaper and to have a more acceptable image for youngsters out for a night on the town. It is encouraging that the brewing industry have of late been doing more to promote them.

(b) Staggered closing hours

Another initiative which could be useful is somehow to stagger pub closing times. The mass ejection of excited young drinkers onto crowded streets and to crowded take-aways, at precisely the same time, is

obviously a large part of the disorder problem in this country. It does not happen in France or Germany which allow late night opening - and which have far less of a disorder problem. But this is admittedly a difficult question. Many would fear that longer opening times would result in more alcohol consumption with accompanying health problems. The results of the recent liberalisation of licensing law to allow opening at all hours up to 11pm may well be relevant to this question.

(c) Identity cards and the prevention of under-age drinking

This study has established that there is a substantial problem of under-age drinking in this country (page 82 Chapter IV) and that under-age drinkers are more likely than older ones to be involved in disorder (page 85). Any strategy to reduce under-age drinking would therefore seem to show promise of reducing disorder. One strategy which has recently become prominent is for proprietors of licensed premises to demand identity cards from youngsters before serving them with alcoholic drinks, in order to ensure that the law is not being broken. (The law allows 16 and 17 year olds to be in a pub, but prohibits them from ordering or consuming alcoholic drinks while on the premises.) The young men involved in the group discussions in this study were on the

whole in favour of identity cards as a way of
tightening up the observance of under-age drinking laws
(page 121)
Local experiments and initiatives in the
use of ID cards in pubs are in place in many areas and
the effects of those schemes should be monitored.

Identity cards may not be the most successful strategy
to enforce the law. It is possible their effect could
be circumvented, for instance, by persuading older
members of a given drinking group to buy alcoholic
drinks at the bar. It is possible that if they did
work and 16 and 17 year olds ceased to visit pubs,
their anti-social activities would simply displace
elsewhere, less easy to police. In Guildford and
Woking one third of the young men aged 16-17 were using
pubs at the weekend. This is a lot of young men to
have wandering the streets or looking for entertainment
elsewhere. If they are not to resort to warehouse
parties or drinking in derelict buildings, any strict
enforcement of the law needs to be accompanied at local
level with a serious attempt to provide alternative
places of resort.

As this report has stressed, the precise determinants
of disorder vary considerably at local level. For
these reasons it would seem best that each local area
to work out its own policies for applying the law on
under-age drinking.

More general strategies: the brewing interest

The strategies suggested all depend in some way on legislative or fiscal controls. But there is much that citizens themselves can do to ameliorate the problems of non-metropolitan violence, within the current legislative and fiscal framework. Action is possible on two fronts: both by the brewing industry and by the public.

A recent market research report prepared for the brewing industry ('The On Trade Revolution', Mintel Publications Ltd, 1988) has shown that more than £13 billion passed across the counters of pubs and other licensed premises in 1987 but that alcoholic drinks accounted for only two thirds of this turnover and that this proportion is shrinking. More and more turnover (and profits) are coming from the sale of food and non-alcoholic drinks. The Mintel report argues that if the profitability of the industry is to be sustained, the historic male-dominated pub culture forbidding to women and families, must change. They forecast that food and soft drinks are the growth section of the market and will overtake alcohol as the biggest source of revenue for the on-trade within the next five years. The report says "Pub culture has historically been a male one, largely community based and implicitly forbidding to women and families. Pub owners can no longer afford to rely on their historical customer base". The image of the pub as primarily somewhere for young men to 'knock back lager' in Saturday night sessions is now irrelevant to the industry as a whole. Mintel believes.

If Mintel are right, it is in the interest of the licensed trade

itself, as well as of society as a whole, to get rid of the image of the pub as a haunt for 'lager louts', a place of danger and disorder. It may be tempting for large tied house chains to retain some 'rough pubs' in central entertainment locations taking quick profits from the high-spending heavy-drinking youth market. But it is dangerous for the trade as a whole to ignore the impact such pubs have on the perceptions and social habits of the wider market. Most British pubs are not 'free houses', they are tied outlets, the responsibility of large brewing chains. The large brewery chains have already done much but could perhaps do more to civilise the 'youth pubs' in central entertainment locations, by making sure there is enough space, by making sure food and non-alcoholic drinks more easily available, and by encouraging the presence of young women.

More general strategies: the public

Finally, is there anything the concerned citizen can do in places plagued by entertainment centre violence? This report suggests there is and can be. Towns known as 'trouble-sites' can turn round and become more civilised places on Friday and Saturday evenings. The young men who cause the disorder do not seem, by and large, to be actuated by any particular aggressive principles. They are mainly bored youngsters with nowhere to go, who may have drunk too much and are looking for entertainment. Disorder escalates sporadically, almost by accident, much influenced by the direct physical situation.

When any particular town, village or area becomes known as a trouble-site, local interests should come together to consider just what are determinants of the local problem and what steps could be

taken to reduce it. Are, for instance, the take-aways sited in the wrong place? Is there insufficient transport away from the city centre? Where do incidents map? At what time? Would for instance a late night coffee stall at the other end of town be a useful initiative? Could someone be found to staff it?

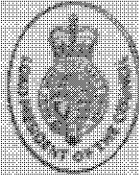
The exact problems to be solved will differ in each place but earlier chapters of the report both suggest means of analysis of local disorder and ways of improving matters. It could be useful in any area known to be the site of trouble for citizens to join together with the Divisional Police Commander and local authority representatives to attempt to work out what could be done. Local police/community consultative groups could well take the lead in initiating discussion. Licensees and proprietors of take-aways should be represented on any committee. And, most importantly, the young people themselves who use the local entertainment centre should be consulted. Some of them will have pursued violence. But the great majority are not seeking violence; they are seeking a happy night out with their friends. Their insights as to how to prevent violence and disorder could be more useful than anyone else's.

The smaller towns and entertainment centres of England and Wales are not without social resources and social cohesion. A problem has been identified - first by the Hayes report and now by this study. The citizens of non-metropolitan England and Wales can do a great deal to solve it.

Table 9a

Crime Profile for Violence against the Person for
Towns in Relation to Male Population Compared to
Respective Counties '83-'87

Location	Rate per 1000 '83	Rate per 1000 '87	County Rate per 1000 '83	County Rate per 1000 '87
*Cowplains	6.3	12.8	3.9	4.7
Gravesend	9.2	12.4	3.2	4.2
*Woking	4.0	6.7	2.5	3.4
Guildford	6.0	7.3	2.5	3.4
*Haverhill	10.6	12.5	3.6	5.0
Sudbury	1.9	5.6	3.6	5.0



CF - No Trace

R1911

2

PRIME MINISTER

ASB
19/1

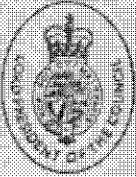
MINISTERIAL GROUP ON ALCOHOL MISUSE

Baroness Masham wrote to you on 21 December about her Report on Young People and Alcohol. She wrote to me on similar lines. The Ministerial Group considered Lady Masham's Report this afternoon. We were able to agree what I believe is a strong package of measures, including some changes to the Licensing Bill. The main proposals are set out in the attached press release which I issued straight after the meeting. I have spoken to the Press and written to Lady Masham in slightly more detail. A copy of my letter is enclosed.

The outcome of the meeting will be announced to the House in an arranged written answer.

JW

18.1.88



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

18 January 1988

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter of 4 January. As you know, the Ministerial Group considered your Report on Young People and Alcohol today. I am writing straight away to let you know the outcome.

First, the Group agreed that a number of the Report's recommendations on the law should be implemented in the Licensing Bill. I am sure you will be glad to hear this. Home Office Ministers will, therefore, be tabling amendments to the Bill at report stage to make it illegal for wholesalers to sell alcohol to under 18s; to strengthen the offence of selling alcohol to under-age drinkers and to increase the maximum penalty for doing so. There will also be measures relating to off-licences.

We have agreed that the Home Office should open discussions with the Magistrates' Association about a number of the other recommendations which do not require legislation, especially the proposals for a Code of Practice for Licensing Committees, inspection visits to premises and training for justices.

On health education, treatment and facilities there is to be a package of measures. The Health Education Authority (HEA) which replaced the Health Education Council in April this year has now drawn up its strategy for handling alcohol education. They are still discussing this with DHSS but alcohol is to be one of the Authority's five major programmes. As well as the many initiatives this will involve, we shall be looking to Government Departments to take initiatives of their own, for example:

- the Department of Education and Science will be discussing with the HEA, the provision of a pack of curriculum materials for use in schools, institutes of higher education and teacher training;
- a pack for use by youth workers is already being prepared and should be ready in May;
- the Report is to be drawn to the attention of working groups preparing for the proposed national curriculum;
- Home Office Prison Department has started work to develop a health education curriculum and pre-release training in all establishments and the Probation Service will provide follow-up arrangements;
- the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work has put forward proposals to reform basic qualifying training, including alcohol and substance abuse as one of the essential elements of knowledge for new qualified workers;
- we shall also be approaching the Alcohol Education Research Council to undertake research into the needs of ethnic minority communities; as the Report suggested, more information is needed about this and we thought it best to start there.

Contd 2/ . .

These initiatives are in addition to work on how to achieve more effective local action and co-operation with better analysis of local problems. This would include looking at the best ways of providing alternative places for young people to meet.

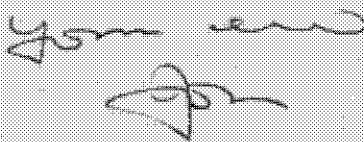
We took a very careful look at advertising and the media, examining market research, sales and other data including the results of research undertaken in countries where alcohol advertising is already banned and statistics on the growth in advertising expenditure and consumption in the low-alcohol and no-alcohol beer and wine sector. We also considered the codes of advertising practice, their enforcement and the portrayal of drinking in general TV programming.

As a result we concluded that a ban on alcohol advertising in the cinema and on TV would not be needed if the codes were tightened up and applied more effectively. I have already had some informal meetings with broadcasting organisations and the advertising industry. Their response to suggestions about ways in which the advertising codes could be improved and to concerns about general TV programming leads me to believe we can expect good results when we pursue the matter with them.

I understand that the Home Secretary expects to be answering a Parliamentary Question tomorrow about the conclusions reached by the Group. The answer will refer to one or two other points as well as setting out the broader strategy.

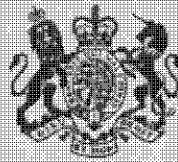
I do hope you will agree with me that together these measures and the work we are planning provide a positive response to your Report. I must say we found it a most valuable guide.

Thank you so much for your good wishes which I return to you and David.



JOHN WAKEHAM

The Baroness Masham of Ilton
Dykes Hill House
Masham
nr Ripon
North Yorkshire
HG4 4NS



file down

GR

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

21 January 1988

*CIP
Should be
Roll*

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON ALCOHOL MISUSE

The Prime Minister has seen the Lord President's minute of 18 January and has noted this without comment.

P. A. Bearpark

Ms. Alison Smith,
Lord President's Office.

R



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

29 December 1987

Dear Lady Masham

Thank you very much for your letter of 21 December enclosing a copy of your report on "Young People and Alcohol". I hope to have a chance to read this during the Christmas recess.

With best wishes,

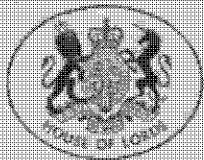
Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Baroness Masham of Ilton.

*P.S. 27th December - am already
well into the report - and finding
it interesting and disturbing.*

MB



213/12

Dykes Hill House
Masham
RIPON
North Yorkshire
HG4 4NS

The Rt Hon Margaret H Thatcher
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

21 December 1987

Dear Prime Minister,

There is no doubt that there is anxiety about under age drinking throughout the country.

Our Committee felt young people needed a positive clear structure; the law, at present, is very vague concerning drinking. I enclose the Report in case you have time to glance at it.

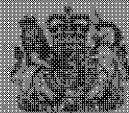
We would like children to grow up with a responsible attitude towards drinking alcohol and to know of its dangers if taken in excess.

My very best wishes to you and Denis for 1988.

*Yours ever
Sue*

SARONESS MASHAM OF ILTON
COUNTESS OF SWINTON

(enc)

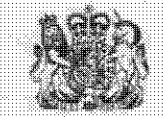


HOME OFFICE
STANDING CONFERENCE
ON
CRIME PREVENTION

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON
**YOUNG PEOPLE AND
ALCOHOL**

24 NOVEMBER 1987

MINISTRY OF THE CROWN
SIR JOHN GORDON



HOME OFFICE
**STANDING CONFERENCE
ON
CRIME PREVENTION**

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON
**YOUNG PEOPLE AND
ALCOHOL**

24 NOVEMBER 1987

WORKING GROUP ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

Summary of conclusions and recommendations

In Section A of the report, we examine the data on young people, alcohol consumption, and crime. Our main conclusions are:

- there is evidence of regular, often illegal, drinking of alcohol by adolescents
- it is not possible to prove a causal link between the consumption of alcohol and crime in general
- there is a strong association between intoxication and certain crimes of violence and disorder, and that there is by definition a link between intoxication and offences of drunkenness and drink-driving
- that young people (particularly young men) are especially implicated in these types of crime, and are the heaviest drinkers, mainly drinking beer
- that the law regulating the consumption of alcohol by those under 18 is complicated, anomalous, and widely flouted.

(Paragraphs (1-49))

In Section B we consider ways of reducing these problems. We acknowledge that, in many cases, alcohol abuse is only a symptom of deep-seated problems faced by young people; but we conclude that it is worthwhile to try to tackle alcohol-related crime by measures to reduce alcohol abuse among young people.

(Paragraphs (50-54))

Education plays a fundamental role by explaining to people why alcohol consumption needs to be moderated for the good of society and the individual. We recommend:

- that the Government should re-examine its health education priorities in order to make them meet more closely the scale of the alcohol abuse problem
(Paragraph (56))
- that local education authorities should review the adequacy of their alcohol and other drug education programmes; that such programmes should reflect the diversity of cultural backgrounds of pupils.
(Paragraph (60))
- that the Government should consider giving health and social education programmes proper prominence in the proposed national curriculum
(Paragraph (60))
- that appropriate in-service training for health education should be made available to teachers, and that this should include sessions to help teachers understand their own attitudes towards alcohol.
(Paragraph (61))
- since parental drinking habits are a crucial influence on young people's attitudes to alcohol, we welcome the development of educational material designed to involve parents in alcohol education programmes, and recommend that this should be continued in future material
(Paragraph (64))
- that the DHSS should give urgent consideration to appointing serving teachers from the primary and secondary sectors to the Health Education Authority.
(Paragraph (68))

Advertising is undoubtedly influential in shaping attitudes. We recommend:

- that, in line with the increasing practice in other European countries, the existing voluntary ban on television advertising of spirits should be extended to ban all advertising of alcoholic drinks on television and in the cinema
(Paragraph (72))
- that, following the welcome moves by some brewers to promote non-alcoholic beers and wines, further efforts should be made to promote these drinks as an attractive alternative to alcohol, and that the profit margin on these and other soft drinks should be no greater than for alcoholic drinks
(Paragraph (73))
- that the broadcasting authorities should monitor the portrayal of alcohol consumption on television
(Paragraph (74))
- that the Government should consider the introduction of health warnings on alcoholic drink containers
(Paragraph (75))

Alcohol taxation is one means of influencing consumption. We recommend:

- that the Government consider increasing the tax on stronger beers
(Paragraph (77))
- that the tax on cider be changed to increase the duty on high-strength ciders, and bring it roughly into line with that for beer
(Paragraph (79))

Alternative facilities for young people are one means of attracting them away from under-age drinking and alcohol abuse. We recommend:

- that the alcoholic drinks industry, with local agencies and the community, sets up a wide range of alcohol-free youth facilities and evaluates their effectiveness, building upon the work of the kinds of facilities described.
(Paragraph (84))

Ethnic minority communities suffer from alcohol abuse like the majority community, but there may be particular cultural factors which cause extra difficulties for them, or make existing facilities unsuitable. We have only had time to look in any detail at the needs of the Asian communities.

We recommend:

- that funds be made available to establish a national alcohol counselling service for minority communities
(Paragraph (95))
- that literature on sensible drinking of alcohol should be tailored to the requirements of different ethnic groups
(Paragraph (95))
- that dry houses, catering for members of ethnic minority communities who would have difficulties in benefitting from existing facilities, be established
(Paragraph (95))

- that hospitals should encourage Asian patients with alcohol and drug-related problems to see specialist counsellors, and advise them to follow up support programmes with an ethnic minority counselling service
(Paragraph (95))
- that further study of the needs of ethnic minority communities is required
(Paragraph (95))

The role of the probation and social services is important. The existing level of social services' involvement in dealing with young offenders with alcohol problems is low. We hope that this will increase. We recommend:

- that greater emphasis be given to alcohol abuse training in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work
(Paragraph (100))
- that the Government should consider a modest injection of additional resources to develop further community-based facilities for young offenders with alcohol problems
(Paragraph (100))
- that probation committees should assess management strategies for implementing policies designed to address local problems
(Paragraph (100))
- that probation services, as well as social services, would benefit from the identification of specialist workers who can inform, educate, and support colleagues in work with alcohol problems
(Paragraph (100))

The Youth Service undertakes a wide range of work, much of which can benefit young people at risk from alcohol abuse, especially those who do not respond to statutory provision. Successful work to save young people from alcohol abuse reduces the costs to the community of alcohol-related crime and other problems. We recommend:

- that the Government builds upon its encouraging funding for youth facilities with outreach workers by considering favourably applications for funding from such projects
(Paragraph (112))
- that there should be further funding for the training of youth workers, more attractive youth facilities, and for staff resources
(Paragraph (114))

The inter-agency approach is a particular feature of crime prevention: working together, local agencies can achieve far more than they can do individually. We recommend:

- that each Regional Health Authority should include alcohol abuse among young people in its health promotion policy, and set down general guidelines for District Health Authorities
(Paragraph (125))
- that District Health Authorities should decide what action is appropriate in conjunction with statutory, private, and voluntary agencies
(Paragraph (125))
- that the Government should encourage and guide local action
(Paragraph (126))

Custodial establishments house young people whose alcohol problems may cause them to reoffend. We recommend:

- that there should be a centrally determined programme for education and counselling in young offender establishments, developed in conjunction with those agencies who could assist people with alcohol problems after their release
(Paragraph (132))

The law is a blunt tool for dealing with social problems: crime prevention aims to deal with the problem before it reaches the stage of criminality. However, the law can be an important signal of society's attitudes; and anomalous laws, or laws which are difficult to enforce, can undermine the messages we seek to put across through education. Especially in the case of under-age drinking, we believe that the present law makes it hard to discourage adolescents from drinking alcohol unsupervised in circumstances where they may get into trouble. Without pretending to undertake an exhaustive study in this area, we have made a number of suggestions which we hope the Government will consider. Our main recommendations are:

- that the present minimum age for the purchase and consumption of alcohol be retained
(Paragraph (140))
- that, in order to make the law readily understood and reasonably consistent, the purchase or consumption of alcoholic drinks in all parts of licensed premises, registered clubs, wine warehouses and hotels and restaurants, by those under 18 be made illegal; and that, subject to the Government being satisfied that such a law could be enforced without creating unnecessary friction or disorder between the police and young people, the consumption of alcohol in public places by people under 18 be made illegal
(Paragraphs (142, 144 & 151))
- that all sales of alcoholic liquor be made by, or effectively supervised by, people aged at least 18
(Paragraph (147))
- that where alcohol is sold or supplied to or for an under-age person the onus should be placed upon the licensee to prove to a court that all reasonable steps had been taken to prevent the offence
(Paragraph (154))
- that crime problems associated with licensed premises be taken into consideration by licensing justices and that a code of licensing practice be drawn up
(Paragraphs (165-166))
- that magistrates be empowered to undertake inspection visits of licensed premises and registered clubs
(Paragraph (170))

WORKING GROUP ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

Membership

Chairman: Baroness Masham

Mr B Askew	Personnel Director, Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster); Chairman, Yorkshire Regional Health Authority.
Mr A Cheesman	Director, Off Licence and Delicatessen Buying J Sainsbury; Member, British Retailers Association.
Prof A Clare	Head of Psychiatry, Medical College, St Bartholomew's Hospital; Executive Member, Alcohol Concern; Member, Health Education Authority.
Mr J Evans	Director of Social Services Powys.
Mr C Fullwood	Chief Probation Officer, Greater Manchester.
Mr G George	Headteacher, Wembley High School. Member, Teachers' Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Education.
Father M Masterson	Senior RC Chaplain, HM Youth Custody Centre, Onley.
Ms A Mountain	Youth Work Adviser, National Youth Bureau.
Captain P Packman	Salvation Army Detoxification Unit, Whitechapel Road.
Ch Supt A Parker	Division Commander, Kent County Constabulary.
Mr M Pink	Solicitor, Clerk to the Justices, South Gloucestershire Petty Sessional Division.
Mr G S Rai	Co-ordinator, Ethnic Counselling Network, Hounslow.
Dr J Sibert	Consultant Paediatrician, Llandough Hospital.
Mr A Townsend	Home Office Crime Prevention Unit.
Secretary: Mr T Brittain	Home Office Crime Prevention Unit

Terms of reference

To consider the part which alcohol plays in the commission of crime by young people;
to review the problem of under-age drinking;
to make recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

This report is called "Young People and Alcohol"; but, as we discovered when we sat down to discuss it, the story of young people and alcohol is really one chapter in the much longer tale of our society's failure to come to terms with alcohol abuse.

Alcohol problems among young people are not new: in Liverpool in 1877, 350 children aged 12 or under were found drunk and incapable in the streets. As the disturbing information detailed in Section A of our report shows, the young are still the victims of their own and others' failure to use alcohol sensibly: but that failure cannot be laid exclusively at the doors of any one group. Our recommendations in Section B therefore address a wide range of agencies — Government, police, courts, brewers, publicans, retailers, teachers, social workers, youth workers, probation officers, health authorities, prison staff, the media, parents. That list is an indication of the way in which alcohol problems permeate our society.

Some of this report is taken up with recommendations on ways in which the law might be used to reduce the problems. We emphasise here, as elsewhere, that legal regulation is only one part of the answer, and that our legal recommendations should be seen in the context of the whole package of recommendations in this report, which seek to create a climate in which society is better able to overcome alcohol abuse.

We strive to reach unanimity on every recommendation without reducing the report to a bland statement of measures with which everyone could feel comfortable: in some cases, a few of us have had to bow to the will of the majority. Some of the recommendations require considerable further study, but we thought it better to promote debate than to opt for caution. We hope that the result is a thought-provoking report.

Acknowledgments

In preparing our report we have sought and received views and information from a wide range of individuals and organisations. Young people explained the circumstances which led them to abuse alcohol; professionals engaged in work with young people explained how they thought the problems could best be overcome; organisations representing a variety of interests submitted their proposals; and numerous individuals helped us with information. We are very grateful to all of them for the time and trouble they took to help us in our task.

SECTION A — ALCOHOL AND CRIME — THE PROBLEM

(1). This section of the report sets out the extent of the problem. Although the circumstances which lead to excessive drinking of alcohol vary widely between individuals, one of the most important facts about alcohol abuse is that it affects every age, every occupation, and every racial group in this country: the information in this section of the report applies to everybody. We have assembled information on three issues: patterns of drinking amongst the young; the association between alcohol consumption and crime; and under-age drinking. It is on the basis of this information that we have formulated the recommendations contained in the second half of the report.

Alcohol consumption by young people

(2). The Office of Population Census and Surveys carried out some research on adolescent drinking on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Security (it should be noted that these figures are based upon self-reported surveys, and may therefore be subject to untruthful replies). Some of the research findings are summarised below:

Table (A)

Have had a "proper drink" (i.e. a substantial measure of an alcoholic drink)

	England and Wales		Scotland	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
13 year olds	82%	76%	71%	57%
14 year olds	88%	87%	87%	78%
15 year olds	92%	91%	91%	88%
16 year olds	91%	89%	82%	83%
17 year olds	92%	91%	93%	92%
Sample size	2498		2364	

(3). The picture emerges of a society in which, by early adolescence, the large majority of people have had some experience of alcohol, although Scottish adolescents appear to be introduced to alcohol rather later than their English and Welsh counterparts. By 17, i.e. before the minimum age for ordinary alcohol drinking in pubs, at least nine out of ten adolescents report having had some experience of alcohol. By themselves, these figures do not tell us very much, since they cover those whose experience of alcohol consists of one drink, to those who are regular alcohol drinkers. Further figures from the survey give a fuller picture:

Table (B)

Usually have an alcoholic drink at least once a week

	England and Wales		Scotland	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
13 year olds	29%	11%	14%	7%
14 year olds	34%	24%	20%	19%
15 year olds	52%	37%	34%	22%
16 year olds	46%	36%	32%	25%
17 year olds	61%	54%	47%	36%

If these figures are reliable, a sizable minority of schoolchildren are regular (though not necessarily heavy) alcohol drinkers, and the proportion among schoolchildren rises swiftly as they approach school leaving age. By 17, around half drink alcohol regularly.

(4). It is arguable that even these figures are not necessarily alarming: *if* they reflect carefully supervised drinking of alcohol at home rather than illicit drinking elsewhere, and *if* it is a good thing to introduce children gradually to social drinking of alcohol, rather than release them with no experience to unfettered pub drinking at 18, they may not represent any social harm. Figures on the location of adolescent drinking are therefore especially important.

Table C

Where adolescents usually drink alcohol (Eng & W)

	13		14		15		16		17	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pub/Bar	19%	13%	22%	24%	44%	42%	41%	47%	68%	57%
Club/disco	19%	14%	17%	27%	36%	41%	34%	48%	41%	48%
Parties	29%	27%	37%	45%	55%	56%	43%	45%	44%	29%
Home	71%	78%	67%	68%	55%	52%	47%	45%	25%	33%
Elsewhere	15%	11%	16%	12%	20%	13%	5%	4%	6%	3%

Where adolescents usually drink alcohol (Scotland)

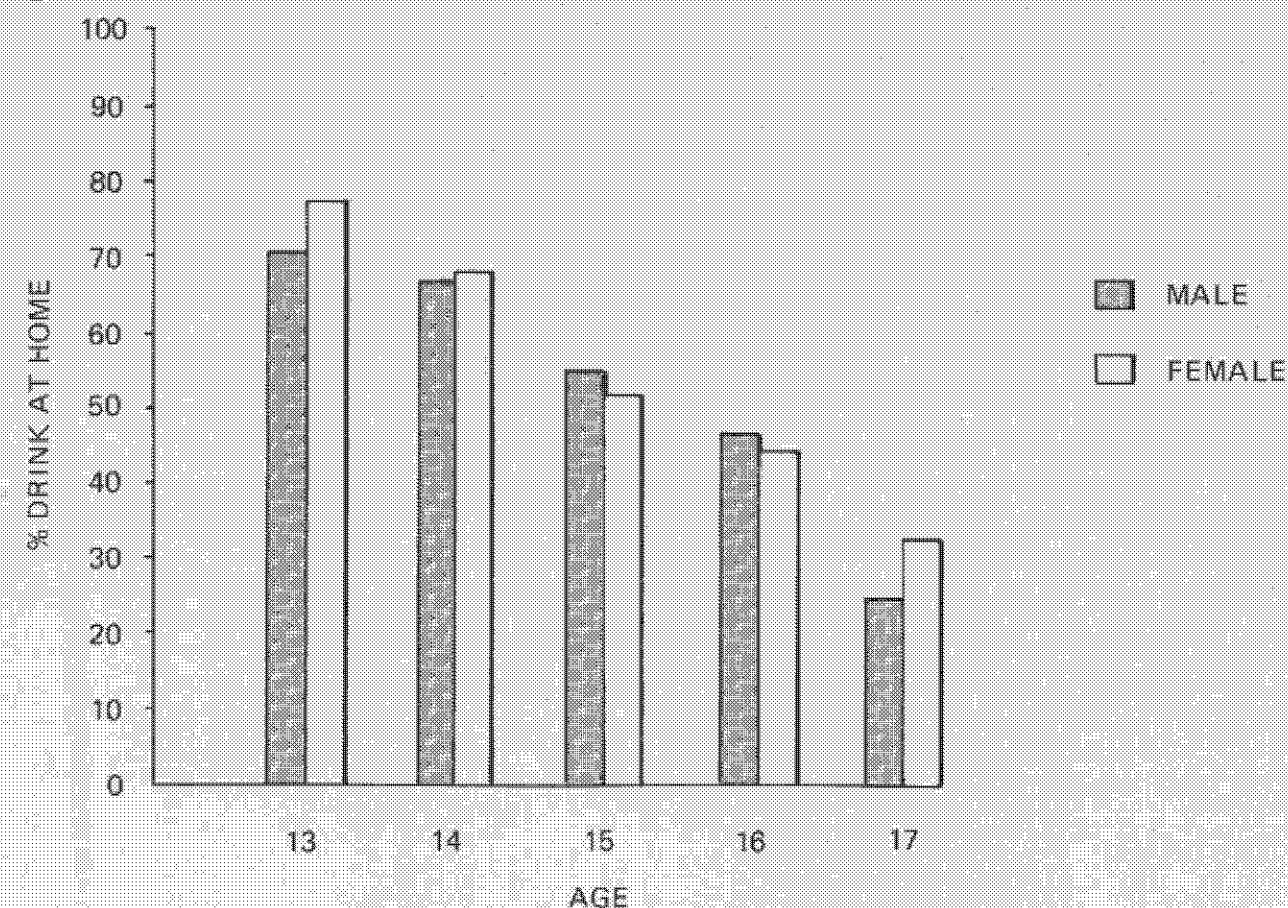
	13		14		15		16		17	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pub/Bar	6%	2%	11%	11%	19%	16%	25%	18%	50%	34%
Club/disco	10%	10%	18%	21%	20%	28%	30%	39%	45%	65%
Parties	23%	22%	35%	43%	46%	47%	31%	38%	31%	28%
Home	59%	67%	47%	48%	43%	47%	37%	41%	23%	39%
Elsewhere	32%	21%	34%	29%	29%	26%	18%	6%	9%	3%

(5). There seem to be two particularly important features in these figures: the first is the importance of the home in *early* drinking of alcohol, though it is hard to say to what extent the home drinking is under adult supervision rather than the (illicit) use of parental alcohol. Either way, it is clear that adults in the home have an important influence on adolescent drinking, if only by providing the access to alcohol. The second feature is the way in which licensed premises appear to be an important source of alcohol to a large proportion of adolescents under 18. Although not *all* drinking in licensed premises by under 18s is illegal, it seems clear that under-age drinking is widespread. It is hard to find statistical evidence to show the extent to which the law is flouted, but it is the strong impression of the members of this Group, as professionals and ordinary citizens, that the law has gradually become less and less respected. Without any conscious decision, we seem to be moving into a position where it is accepted that the law on under-age drinking is no longer taken very seriously by many, in spite of regular publicity campaigns by the Brewers' Society. We do not suggest that all publicans, off-licenses, or parents, ignore the law as a matter of course; but we believe that those who do are sufficiently numerous that it is no longer a matter for ordinary comment. There may be arguments, which we shall examine later, for changing the rules; but it is our firm belief that any change of this importance should be made deliberately as a decision by the democratic process, rather than by the accident of unthinking shifts of behaviour.

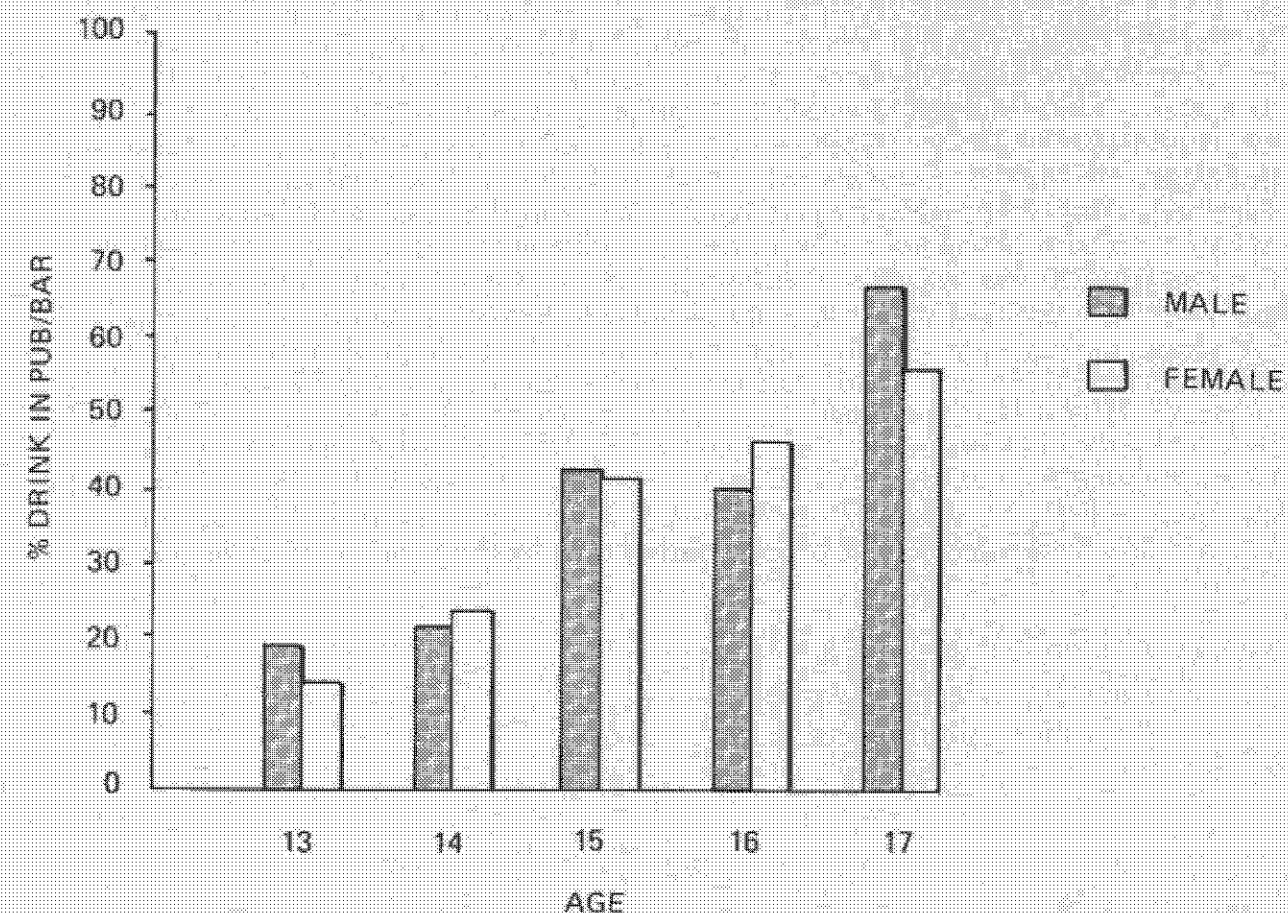
Types of alcohol drunk by adolescents

(6). Research by Exeter University shows the types and quantities of alcoholic drink drunk "during the last 7 days" by a sample of pupils in the 1st to 5th years of secondary schools in 1986.

Drinking at home



Drinking in pub/club



% drinking	1st year		2nd year		3rd year		4th year		5th year	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
any alcohol	50	36	61	47	67	58	70	63	73	66
shandy	34	21	38	26	35	24	30	19	18	11
beer/lager	16	4	23	8	32	15	41	20	54	32
cider	12	7	16	10	20	15	21	18	19	19
wine	15	12	20	20	24	24	21	26	22	27
fortified wine	6	6	9	9	10	15	11	20	10	29
spirits	4	3	8	4	12	9	14	14	25	29

mean no. of units consumed by "drinkers" 3 2 4 3 6 4 7 5 10 6

The picture appearing from these figures is perhaps not unexpected: males are drinking more alcohol than females; there is an increase in the consumption of all alcoholic drinks except shandy; beer is easily the most significant source of alcohol for males. What is, however, startling is the intake of those who reported drinking alcohol during the last 7 days. At fifth form level, the mean average intake of the 73% of males who drank was 10 units (5 pints of beer): although this may not be a sufficiently high level to create a significant health hazard, it does suggest that, for a significant proportion of 15-16 year-olds, alcohol intake is an established habit rather than an occasional treat. A similar survey by OPCS in 1984 suggested that consumption, especially for the lower age groups, was even higher.

Conclusion

(7). None of these figures by itself gives any clue as to the relationship between adolescent drinking of alcohol and crime: what the figures do show, however, is that drinking of alcohol amongst the under-18s is sufficiently widespread that, if alcohol and certain types of crime are associated, then one would expect it to be a significant component in the problem of juvenile crime: this is a question which we examine in the following section.

Association between alcohol consumption and crime

(8). The first part of the Group's terms of reference directed us to examine the links between alcohol consumption and the commission of crime by young people. The whole question of the links between alcohol consumption and the commission of crime — whether by young or old — is a fraught one which has been exercising the minds of researchers for some considerable time. There are some who argue that there is a direct link between a nation's alcohol consumption and the extent to which it suffers from crime and other social ills: others argue that heavy alcohol consumption is, like crime, a symptom of a variety of social ills rather than a cause.

(9). A discussion of the links between alcohol and crime committed by young people cannot be divorced from the broader discussion of crime and alcohol: young people may have special needs which require special remedies, but they are subject to many of the pressures endured by their elders. It would be neither realistic nor fair to try to solve the problem of crime and alcohol abuse amongst the young without recognising that such abuse is shared with, even inherited from, the older generation.

(10). The association between alcohol consumption and criminal activity is easy to demonstrate, though figures vary from study to study: in a descriptive study of 66 people charged with murder in the Glasgow area between 1953 and 1963, 70% were considered to have been affected by alcohol at the time of their offences; other studies have shown figures as low as 20%. Similarly, some studies of those

arrested after assaults show up to 78% had been drinking before the offences, whilst others suggest figures as low as 15%. Generally, studies show that those arrested for violent offences and disorderly behaviour are more likely to have consumed alcohol shortly before the offence than those dealt with for other types of crime. A study of men charged with rape between 1972 and 1976 in six English counties found that almost two thirds were aged 25 or younger; that around one third of the men had drunk at least four drinks before the offence; and that where there was more than one offender, there was the greatest likelihood that they and the victim would be young and have consumed alcohol.

(11). Interviews with prisoners to determine whether they attribute the commission of their crimes to alcohol produce mixed results. For prisoners as a whole, the proportion claiming alcohol as a cause is small, although around 40% of male, and 25% of female prisoners may be described as excessive drinkers. However, for young male prisoners the picture is rather different. Almost two thirds of the inmates of a Scottish young offenders institution in 1980 said that they had committed their offence while under the influence of alcohol; 30% of young prisoners in England and Wales claimed the same. It has to be said that these figures are inherently unreliable, based as they are upon self-reporting, and subject as they are to a possible wish by offenders to blame alcohol rather than themselves.

(12). Members of our Group expressed concern about the effects of alcohol upon domestic violence. The research evidence here is unclear. To begin with, most domestic violence takes place in private and goes unreported; in the past, such incidents have not always been recorded by the police, although this attitude is now changing. Furthermore, most evidence is gleaned from small samples, often in refuges for battered women: it is doubtful how representative such samples are. The figures available suggest that domestic violence spans all age-groups, including the young. Two 1970s studies of battered wives suggested that over half of them had husbands who became drunk regularly, and that in over 40% of the cases drinking was accompanied by violence. On the other hand, another study revealed that drinking behaviour was not the *source* of most conflicts: it appears that in many cases drinking is the trigger, or the excuse, or merely accompanies domestic violence, rather than the root cause.

Causal links

(13). It is clear that the consumption of alcohol accompanies a proportion of criminal activity: what is less clear is the extent to which consumption is the *cause*. It is not yet possible, and may indeed prove to be impossible, to define the precise extent and nature of any causal relationship between the use of alcohol and crime, other than for alcohol-defined offences. However, commonsense, and the experience of professionals in the criminal justice system, suggest that a very significant proportion of certain types of crime is accompanied by intoxication. With the exception of offences in which intoxication is itself the offence, or an indispensable ingredient of the offence, most offences may be caused by a variety of factors. The fact that the same offence may be committed by a sober person and a drunken person does not mean that, in the case of the drunk, the alcohol was not the causative, or at least a contributory, factor.

(14). These arguments lead to the conclusion that alcohol is implicated in a very wide variety of crimes, though much more strongly in some than in others. It is impossible to assess with any accuracy the proportion in which alcohol is a, or the, causative factor. However, there are certain types of crime in which alcohol is so strongly implicated that it is reasonable to assume that effective measures to reduce alcohol abuse would reduce their occurrence. These are not only offences in which intoxication is actually a necessary ingredient — drinking and driving,

being drunk and disorderly — but also certain offences of disorder and violence which are predominantly associated with the areas around licensed premises, and in which young people are especially involved: we have therefore studied them in some detail.

Crimes in which alcohol is most clearly implicated

(i) Young people and vehicle offences

(15). The level of death and injuries arising from drunken driving remains extremely high, despite some recent improvement. The graph and table opposite give details of accidents involving drunken driving, including figures showing convictions and fatalities by age.

(16). The involvement of young people in all forms of traffic accident is particularly significant. Young people are especially likely to drive at the times when the risk of accident is highest, and to ride motorcycles. In 1984, 28% of all car accidents involved a driver under 25, 10% under 20. About 43% of accidents between 2200 and 0359 involved drivers under 25, 16% under 20; the corresponding figures for riders were 79% and 50%. 71% of motorcycle accidents involved a rider under 25, and 47% a rider under 20.

The part that alcohol plays in these statistics is clear:

- 20-24 year-olds have the highest rate of driver breath-test failure;
- 39% of drivers aged 20-24 killed in road accidents are over the legal limit;
- 32% of drink-driving convictions involve under 25s;
- 21 is the peak age for drink-driving convictions.

(17). The graph on page 16 shows that the risk of accident, particularly for young and infrequent drinkers, increases rapidly with blood alcohol level. The highest incident of fatalities over the legal limit occurs for drivers in their early twenties (41%) (though the figure for teenagers (20%) is rather lower).

(18). Studies of drinking habits undertaken by the Home Office Research and Planning Unit give an indication of the *undetected* problem of drinking and driving. There are roughly 3.3m men aged 17-29 with driving licences; they drink 2.7 times a week on average, and on 50% of these occasions they drink more than 5 units of alcohol (about the legal limit). On 10% of these occasions, the drinking is followed by driving. Equally significant is the fact that on 97% of the occasions on which driving followed the consumption of more than 5 units, beer was the most frequently consumed beverage. Using these figures it has been calculated that young men who drink in excess of the limit have only a 0.4% chance of conviction on each occasion: there appears to be a very considerable drinking and driving problem involving beer-drinking young men, to which enforcement of the law is unlikely to be an adequate answer.

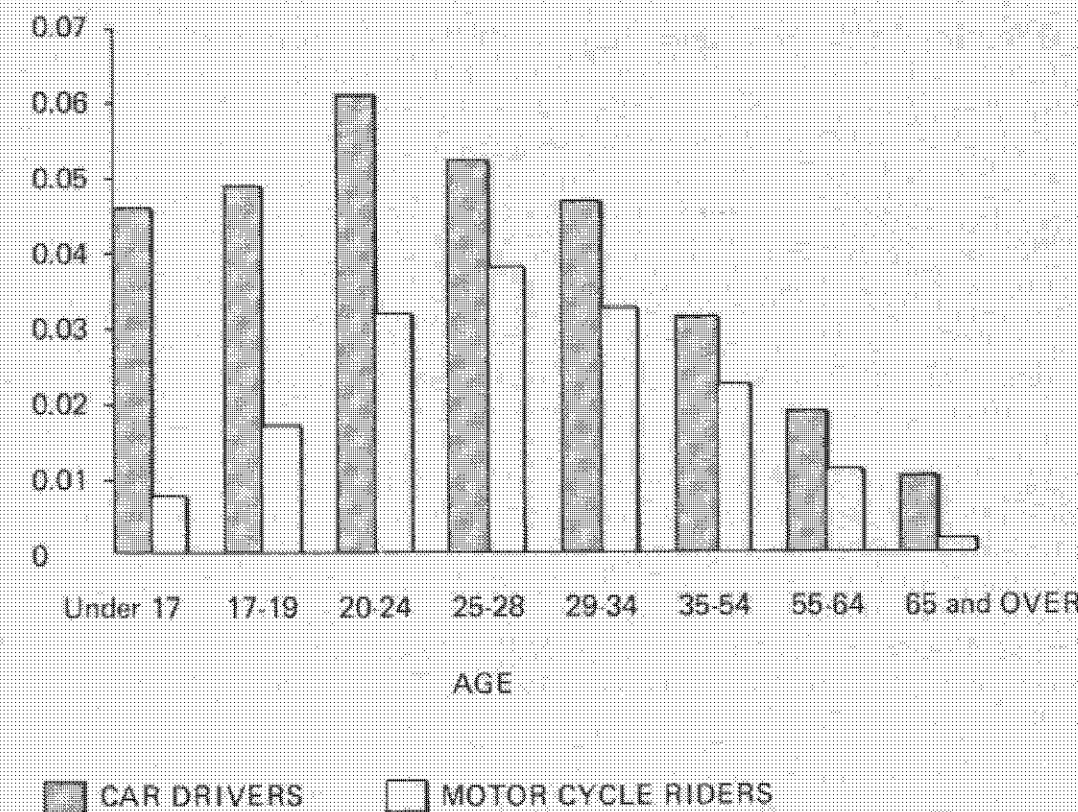
(19). A significant proportion of those convicted of drinking and driving, and those involved in fatal accidents, are only slightly over the limit, and this is especially true of young people, whose mean blood alcohol count is lower than their elders (see table on page 16): since it is likely that the chance of apprehension increases with alcohol level, it is probable that the true proportion of drivers only slightly above the limit is considerably higher. If young people could be persuaded to reduce their consumption levels, it therefore seems likely that a significant number would cease to be over the limit.

DRIVERS KILLED IN GREAT BRITAIN : PERCENTAGE OVER THE LEGAL BLOOD ALCOHOL LIMIT : 1978 - 1985

YEAR	TWO-WHEEL MOTOR VEHICLE RIDERS							CARS AND OTHER MOTOR VEHICLES						
	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+	ALL AGES	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+	ALL AGES
1978	22	44	32	31	25	7	29	41	52	44	36	20	16	33
1979	26	39	39	45	18	20	31	37	43	46	46	29	15	32
1980	23	38	39	35	29	24	29	35	46	40	38	35	17	32
1981	17	39	41	42	20	29	28	21	44	47	41	39	9	31
1982	17	43	47	31	14	19	29	32	48	54	52	30	15	36
1983	17	26	42	26	8	-	23	30	42	46	45	25	8	31
1984	25	30	30	29	31	16	27	20	41	36	30	22	12	28
1985	15	27	35	37	8	16	30	27	39	44	44	22	10	23

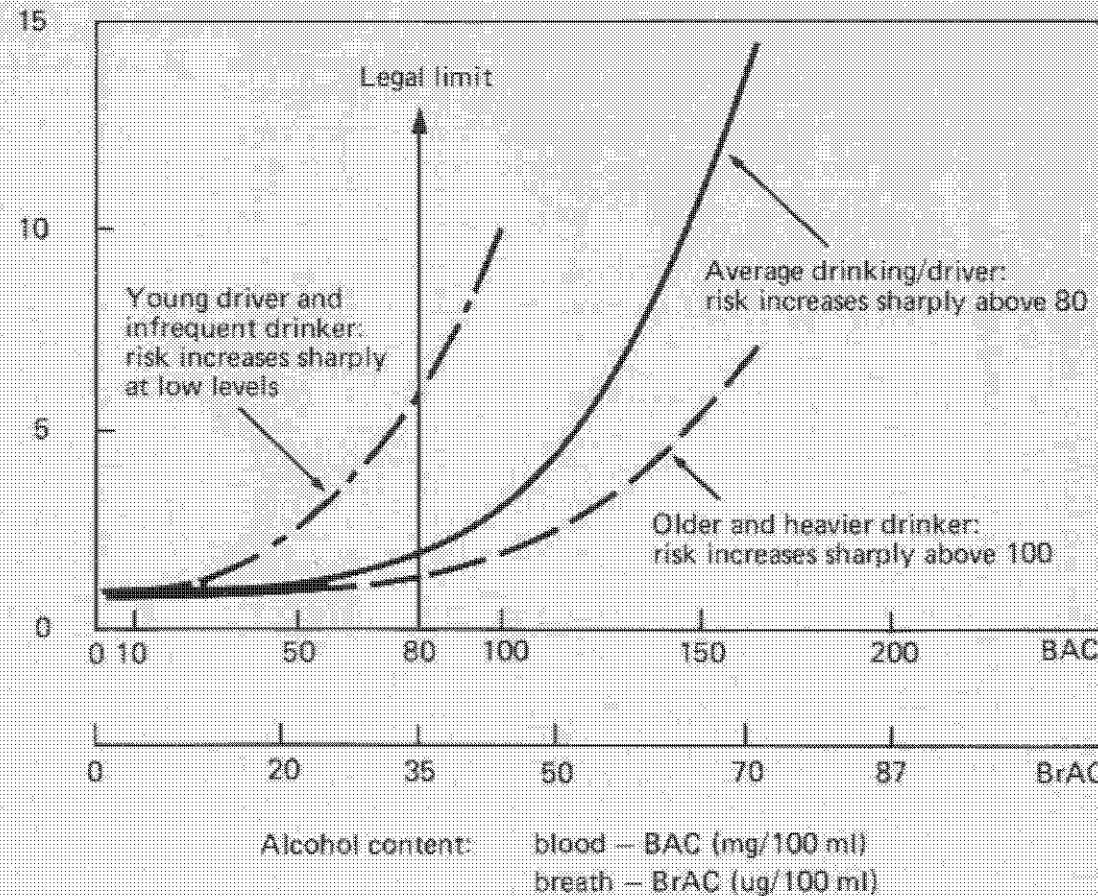
PROPORTION OF DRIVERS AND RIDERS (INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS) FAILING BREATH TEST 1985

PROPORTION FAILING BREATH TEST



Accident risk and blood/breath alcohol levels

Risk of accident involvement



DRIVERS AND RIDERS WITH BAC EXCEEDING 80mg/100ml BY AGE : 1983

	Per cent with BAC exceeding 80mg/100ml for age groups						
	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
DRIVERS	30	42	46	45	25	14	8
RIDERS	17	26	42	26	8	11	0

DISTRIBUTION OF BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION FOR ROAD USERS IN GREAT BRITAIN IN 1983

	Per cent with BAC exceeding (Mg/100ml)						
	9	50	80	100	150	200	
MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVERS	41	34	31	28	21	13	830
MOTOR CYCLE RIDERS	38	27	23	20	14	7	544

(20). Drink-driving is not the only vehicle-related offence in which young people under the influence of drink are implicated. Offences of theft of and from cars ("autocrime") are committed disproportionately by young people: 29% of those found guilty or cautioned for these offences are under 21. A recent Home Office study suggests that 78% of autocrime is committed between the hours of 1800 and 0600; and although there are no official statistics to show to what extent those who commit vehicle offences are intoxicated, the experience of the police is that a good deal of autocrime is committed by drunken young people stealing cars. The table below indicates the scale of young people's involvement in autocrime: 71% of those convicted of autocrime were under 21.

Persons found guilty in 1985 by age-group

Theft from vehicle:	Total	10-13	14-16	17-20	21+
	10229	169	1128	5083	3849
	(% of total)	2	11	50	38
Theft or unauthorised taking of m/v:	Total	593	6731	13067	7201
	27592	2	24	47	26
	(% of total)	2	21	48	29
Total:	Total	762	7859	18150	11050
	37821	2	21	48	29
	(% of total)	2	21	48	29

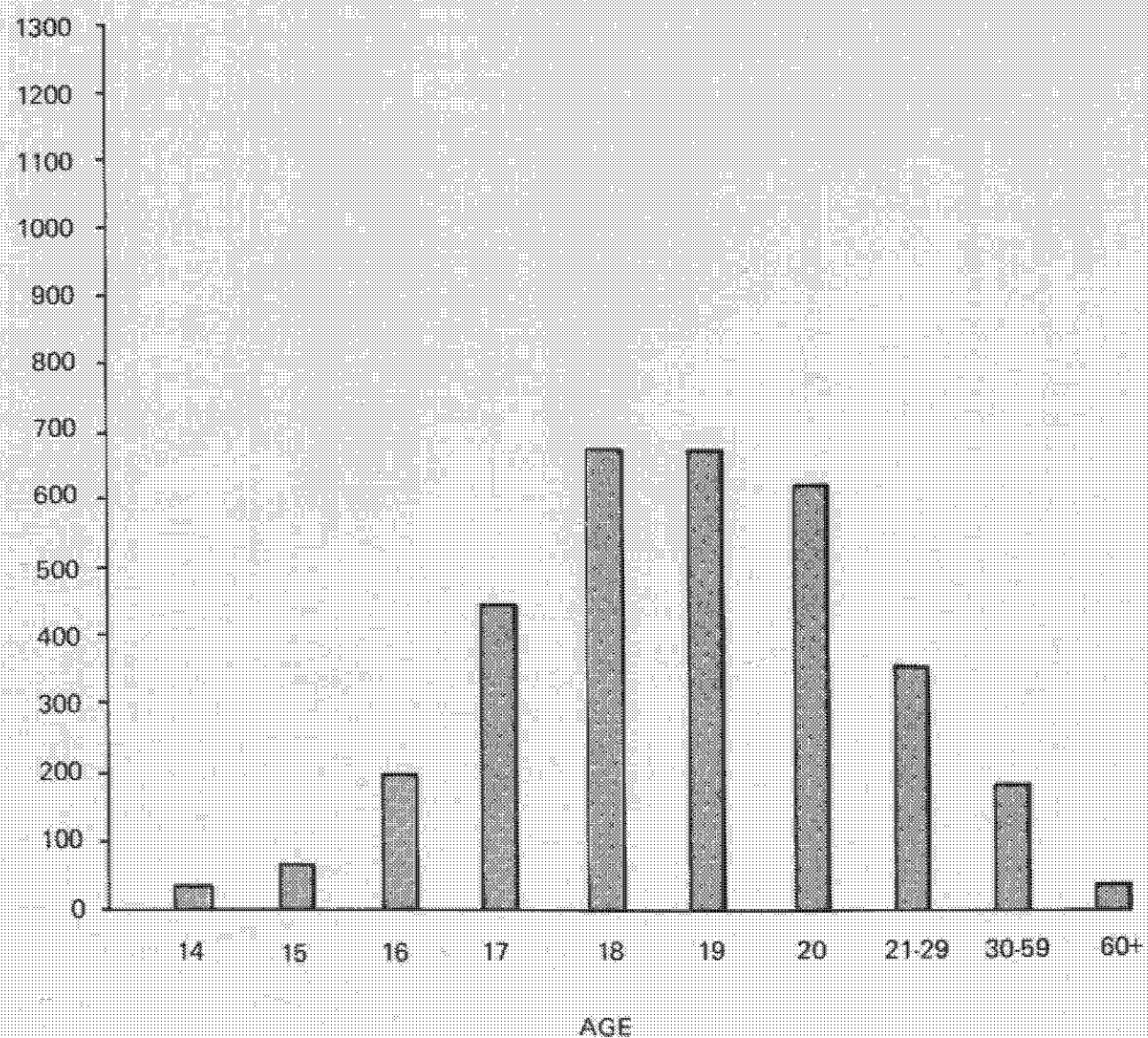
(ii) Drunkenness offences and crimes of disorder

(21). In 1985 there was a total of 83,000 findings of guilt or cautions for offences of drunkenness in England and Wales. About 22,000 of these were committed by people aged under 21, and 82% of the offences were aggravated drunkenness. Around 20% of the offences by those under 21 were dealt with by means of cautions: the rest were dealt with by the courts. 96% of those sentenced were given fines, while 3% were given an absolute or conditional discharge.

22. The extent of involvement of young people in alcohol offences is illustrated by the graph opposite. As the graph shows the rate of findings of guilt or cautions for drunkenness per 100,000 population reaches its peak at age 18: 18 year-olds are almost twice as likely to be found guilty of, or cautioned for, drunkenness offences as those aged 21-29. At 17 — below the minimum age for ordinary drinking of alcohol in pubs — the rate, although lower than for 18 year-olds, is still higher than for the over 21s. For most age-groups, males are more than ten times more involved than females. To some extent, the figures may reflect the attitudes of police and prosecutors in deciding whether or not to apprehend, and prefer charges against, different sections of the population, but it seems unlikely that this could account for the scales of the discrepancies in the figures: what emerges is a problem of drunkenness concentrated amongst young males, with considerable costs for the criminal justice system.

23. The figures for drunkenness cover only those offences in which alcohol consumption is an indispensable ingredient: plainly, a great deal more crime of a disorderly nature is committed under the influence of alcoholic drink. We know that there were about 45,000 males aged 18-24 cautioned or prosecuted for disorder offences in 1985 ("disorder offences" is taken to include summary criminal damage and common or non-indictable assaults as well as disorderly behaviour offences), and it seems likely that a proportion of these were committed by intoxicated people, though it is not possible to quantify this.

The rate of findings of guilt or cautions for drunkenness per 100,000 population (reaches its peak at age 18)



(24). Studies of violent offences, and of disorderly behaviour falling short of serious violence, coming to the notice of the police, consistently show that 20-30% of the incidents take place in or near licensed premises. Studies in several city centres in England and Wales have shown that almost half the incidents of disorderly behaviour dealt with by the police occur shortly after the end of permitted drinking hours, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights, and often involve young men. This probably underestimates the scale of the problem: the police are especially stretched at these times, and are often unable to respond to all incidents of this kind. The existence and concentration of these incidents has considerable resource implications for the police.

(25). Most of these incidents are relatively minor. Sometimes, however, excessive drinking of alcohol leads to more serious outbreaks of disorder. In Lincoln there was a major disturbance at the close of the New Year festivities when fights broke out amongst the crowd; a number of police officers were attacked. Most of those

involved were young people who had been drinking in pubs until shortly before midnight. Similar, though less serious, incidents took place elsewhere at the same time. Alcohol abuse is also an important feature of the outbreaks of disorder often seen in seaside towns on Bank Holiday weekends, and associated with football matches. Measures have already been taken to restrict the availability of alcohol at football grounds and on certain trains, and we understand that these have been successful. However, short of draconian measures to ban alcohol in wide areas at times of expected trouble, it is inevitable that there will be outlets for alcoholic drinks in the vicinity of potential trouble-spots. We hope that the recommendations in Section B of this report will make some contribution to the reduction of public disorder problems associated with alcohol.

(26). Further evidence comes from the British Crime Survey. 50% of a sample of victims of wounding reported that the offender "had been drinking", as did 44% of victims of common assault, and 30% of victims of sexual offences. These figures should be treated with some caution, since the phrase "been drinking" is a loose one, some victims may have simply assumed drunkenness as a cause of anti-social behaviour, and the numbers in the sample were relatively small. However, the figures do confirm the picture that a considerable proportion of violent offences is committed by people who have been drinking.

(27). There emerges a picture of a number of types of offences in which young people and alcohol are especially involved.

The problem of under-age drinking

(28). As we have already suggested, under-age drinking is only a part of the wider problem of alcohol abuse in society, and consideration of it cannot be entirely isolated from the other issues. However, there are a number of features of the problem which make it unique:

- (i) under-age drinking *per se* has legal consequences for the drinker and supplier;
- (ii) under-age drinking involves a particularly vulnerable section of the population;
- (iii) whereas for adults society generally takes the view that they should be allowed relatively unrestricted access to alcohol, it is accepted that there should be strict restrictions upon the drinking of the young;
- (iv) the young are especially susceptible to the effects of alcohol.

From these points, it seems clear to us that there are special considerations applying to drinking by the under-18s: while, in the case of adults, we have proceeded on the basis that widespread restrictions upon the consumption of alcohol would, even if they were desirable on crime prevention grounds, not be acceptable, we have not felt similarly inhibited when looking at the difficulties caused by under-age drinking. On the other hand, we have tried to avoid assuming that, simply because they are young, adolescents' rights and needs should be ignored. We have, therefore, looked at the under-age drinking laws critically, not only to see whether they are effective, but also to see whether they can be justified. To begin with, we think it helpful to explain briefly what the restrictions upon under-age drinking are, since they are much more complicated than is generally realised.

Licensing Laws

(29). Under section 5 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 it is an offence to give intoxicating liquor to a child under 5, except on medical orders. Apart from this provision, people under 18 may consume alcohol quite lawfully at home, in a registered club, or in fact in any place other than a bar in licensed premises.

(30). On *licensed premises*, under-age drinking is controlled by section 169 of the Licensing Act 1964. With one exception, the sale of intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 is completely prohibited in either on- or off-licensed premises. It is an offence for a licensee, or any of his or her staff, *knowingly* to sell alcohol to a young person, and it is an offence for someone under 18 to buy or attempt to buy alcohol on licensed premises, or to consume alcohol in a bar. It is also an offence for anyone to buy a drink for a young person under 18 in a bar. "Alcoholic drink" includes shandy and other drinks mixed on the premises, however small the proportion of alcohol. The exception is that young persons aged between 16 and 18 may purchase beer, porter, cider, or perry with a meal in a dining room or eating area set aside for the purpose.

(31). The table below summarises the law relating to licensed premises and registered clubs:

Age	Provisions
under 5	may not be given alcohol except on medical orders
under 14	may not be in the bar of licensed premises during permitted hours
under 18	may not purchase alcohol from an off-licence may not purchase, be supplied with, or consume alcohol in a bar
However:	
any age	may be present in registered clubs
5+	may consume alcohol in registered clubs may consume alcohol in an eating area on licensed premises, if brought by an accompanying adult
14+	may be in a bar of licensed premises during permitted hours
16+	may purchase beer, porter, cider, or perry with a meal in an eating area on licensed premises

(32). The figures on consumption given in paragraphs (2-7) give some indication of the drinking habits of those aged under 18, and the extent to which they are carried out illegally on licensed premises. Criminal statistics, and the experience of members of our Group, suggest that the criminal justice system only catches a tiny proportion of these illegal acts. In 1985, there were only 170 convictions for selling alcohol to under-age drinkers on licensed premises, and 744 convictions for buying alcohol under-age.

(33). Why should there be so few convictions for what appears to be a widespread offence? Having examined this question, it seems to us that there are a number of reasons concerning the nature of the law, the actions of the courts, the resources of the police, and the behaviour of licensees and retailers.

Problems in enforcement

(34.) The law itself is difficult to enforce. A police officer who suspects that under-age drinking is taking place has to establish a number of elements if there is to be a successful prosecution. First of all, the police must see a young person actually consuming alcohol, or be able to prove that the person is in possession of it. Second, (like the licensee) they must try to establish whether the young person concerned is under 18: this is difficult, since the police have no power to detain someone in order to establish age, nor to compel anyone to disclose age.

(35). Even if the police are able to establish the young person's age, the problems are not over. If the licensee and drinker deny that the drink concerned is alcoholic, there is the expensive and time consuming task of sending the liquid to a forensic laboratory for analysis.

(36). If these two difficulties are overcome, prosecution of the *drinker* may be possible; but there cannot be a successful prosecution of the licensee unless there is proof that the licensee or staff *knowingly* sold intoxicating liquor to a minor. Judging people's ages is notoriously difficult, so "he/she appeared to be 18" is often an easy defence to a charge; and evidence is required in order to show that the drink was actually sold to the minor, or that the bar staff were aware that it was being purchased for the minor. Similar difficulties apply in relation to off-licences.

(37). What information the police receive on under-age drinking tends to come from observation, routine visits, or reports by members of the public. While the police will often have a good idea of where under-age drinking is taking place, especially if they apprehend drunken young people in a public place (often following the commission of criminal damage or public order offences), this is not sufficient to secure a conviction of the licensee. A further difficulty lies in the fact that, in the experience of the police, most under-age drinking takes place on Friday and Saturday nights, the very times when demands on the police are at their highest. If the policing resources are available, the initial response to information about under-age drinking is usually to arrange an official visit to the premises concerned in an effort to detect offenders or at least to warn the licensee against future offences. If this fails, it may be necessary to corroborate the facts by plain clothes observation of the licensed premises concerned, followed by a police raid. This is an expensive business, and it is perhaps not surprising that the police are reluctant to devote their limited resources to dealing with offences which are difficult to prove before a court.

(38). For these reasons, (and also to divert young offenders from the courts), offences are usually dealt with by means of cautions: a warning, or formal caution, is usually administered to young people by an officer of the rank of Inspector or above; and cautions to licensees are recorded at the police station. Repeated cautioning may lead to prosecutions or to police objections to the renewal of the licence.

(39). Late-night drinking establishments cause further difficulties. Extensions until 2 a.m. (3 a.m. in London) may be granted by the licensing justices on condition that drinking is ancillary to meals and/or music and dancing. In practice, the meals, music, and dancing are often ancillary to the drinking, and many late-night drinking establishments are especially popular with young people. However, it is difficult and expensive for the police to obtain the evidence necessary to prosecute the licensee or to persuade the Justices to revoke the extension or refuse the renewal of the licence; and the collection of the evidence has to take place at the very time when police are at their busiest with other offences.

The role of the courts

(40). The courts have a dual role in respect of licensed premises: they try cases in which the law is alleged to have been broken, and their licensing committees have the power to grant, renew, or withhold liquor licences. These two functions, while distinct, are closely related. The decision to renew a licence can take into account a whole variety of factors, including the licensee's adherence to the licensing laws. Plainly, a licensee will be reluctant to do anything which might jeopardise the renewal of his or her licence. However, the fact that convictions for under-age

drinking are hard to come by means that, in practice, the risk to the licence from permitting under-age drinking is small. The results of a questionnaire which we sent to a sample of Justices' Clerks in England and Wales confirmed our suspicion that under-age drinking is rarely a cause for the refusal of licences a fact which they attribute to a shortage of police resources coupled with difficulties in securing convictions. This, and the impressions of the police and ourselves as members of the public, suggests that the law on under-age drinking has to a great extent fallen into disrepute.

The problems of retailers

(41). The Brewers' Society takes steps to encourage bar staff to abide by the law: it distributes guidance to publicans and encourages the display of warning notices about the under-18 rule; most brewers give staff formal training on licensing law. However, while publicans are generally likely to refuse to serve someone obviously under 18, there are a number of circumstances in which a blind eye may be turned:

- an adult in a group buys a drink for a younger member (this is a particular danger in crowded bars and discos, where bar staff have to go out of their way to identify whether the purchaser belongs to a group with under-age members)
- the publican is desperate for business, and may take the view that if others in the area get away with under-age sales, there is no reason not to follow suit
- the publican senses that a refusal may lead to trouble (last year's report of the Working Group on Violence Associated with Licensed Premises stated that many licensees feared that challenging drinkers' ages might lead to violence).

(42). Brewers sometimes dismiss public house managers accused of selling alcohol to under-18s, rather than risk losing a licence. In circumstances where this is likely to stop the sale of drink to minors, the police often refrain from prosecuting if informed of the brewers' intention, rather than pursue a lengthy, costly, and perhaps unsuccessful prosecution.

(43). The advent of large supermarkets has brought with it the self-service off-licence section. The essence of this development is that shoppers should be allowed to examine and choose their alcoholic drink at their leisure. Members of the British Retailers Association (BRA), whose membership sell 80% of the alcohol sold in off-licences and supermarkets, train staff in the law on alcohol sales; and, in association with the Wine and Spirit Association, have produced a booklet, "You and Rules of Selling Drink". The Association reports that in the majority of its members' outlets a member of staff is instructed to supervise the off-licence section at all times. The layout of off-licence sections, which can affect the degree of supervision exercised, varies considerably. In some, the off-licence display is positioned either in a corner of the shop, extending along two walls, to maximise visibility, or on the exit aisle. In others, however, the alcohol display may extend along more than one aisle, in which case supervision may be required and adjusted accordingly.

(44). It seems clear to the Group that self-service outlets carry certain dangers:

- under-age drinkers are exposed to temptation in the course of legitimate shopping (unlike in off-licences, where the presence of the under-age is likely to arouse immediate suspicion);

- the display of alcohol on open-access shelves presents opportunities for theft, thus undermining attempts to enforce the law at the checkout.

Statistics on the relationship between under-age drinking and self-service off-licences do not appear to be available: it is extremely difficult to quantify the theft by customers of any kinds of goods from self-service shops, and even if one could it would still be almost impossible to determine how much theft of alcoholic drinks was undertaken by the under-age. One major retailer recorded 185 apprehensions of minors with alcohol in 1986; a figure which must be set against a total of 350 million customer visits in 280 licensed premises. However, the number of unapprehended incidents is impossible to quantify.

(45). Independent off-licences and small shops can pose particular problems. First of all, they may not have access to the information and training available to larger enterprises; and often they may be supervised by only one member of staff, who may be a minor. One of the curiosities of the current licensing laws is that, except in bars, people under 18 may sell alcohol. Clearly, it may be very difficult for a 16 year-old to challenge a 17 year-old who seeks to buy alcohol. The BRA reports that its members issue standing instructions to staff which stipulate that under-18s employed at the check-out may only sell alcohol in the presence of an adult supervisor.

(46). A further anomaly is created by the growing number of wine warehouses. These are able to exploit a loophole in the law which enables anyone to sell wine by the case (i.e. twelve bottles) without a licence. Not only do such traders need no licence but, since they are not licensed premises, they are not caught by the law preventing sales to the under 18s.

Other sources of alcohol for the under-18s

(47). The picture is confused by the fact that there are numerous opportunities for the under-18s to drink quite legitimately. As has already been explained, the prohibition on drinking alcohol under 18 applies only in licensed bars: there is no law to prevent anyone aged 5 or over consuming alcohol in registered clubs, restaurants, and at home. As the figures in paragraph (2.7) show, a considerable proportion of drinking by minors appears to take place quite legally. The fact that it is legal does not, of course, mean that the drinking does not result in criminal consequences.

Conclusion

(48). From this examination of the problems associated with the consumption of alcohol by young people we draw the following broad conclusions:

- that there is evidence of regular, often illegal, drinking by adolescents that it is not possible to prove a causal link between the consumption of alcohol and crime in general
- that it is clear that there is a strong association between intoxication and certain crimes of violence and disorder, and that there is by definition a link between intoxication and offences of drunkenness and drink-driving
- that there is a concentration of these types of crime around closing time, with serious resource implications for the police
- that young people (particularly young men) are especially implicated in these types of crime, and are also the heaviest drinkers, mainly drinking beer
- that the law regulating the consumption of alcohol by those under 18 is complicated, anomalous, and widely flouted.

SECTION B: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Introduction

(49). In Section A we examined the extent of alcohol abuse among the young, and how this affects criminal activity and other social ills. In this section, we look at the various mechanisms which are available to society to reduce the problems, and make recommendations as to how they might be used better.

The recommendations

(50). The Working Group was established to recommend measures which might be taken to reduce the problem of alcohol-related crime amongst the young: we recognise this limitation, and indeed in the short time available to us it would have been impossible to make recommendations on the wider social issues. We have therefore tried to formulate recommendations which if implemented would have an impact upon alcohol-related crime by young people whether or not accompanied by other measures. Nonetheless, as we have made plain elsewhere in this report, we consider it very important that people do not imagine that "the demon drink" is in every case the root of the evil when intoxicated young people turn to crime, or that crime is the only ill to emerge from alcohol abuse: in many cases, juvenile crime may be simply the result of drunkenness caused by the illicit consumption of alcohol "for a lark"; but often, drunkenness is an escape route for young people whose experience of life may have been marred by poor parenting, sub-standard living conditions, abuse, school failure, or enforced idleness. Some of our recommendations seek at least to solve these injuries by the provision of constructive facilities for young people; but it would be idle to pretend that they are more than a palliative to deep-rooted problems. This Group cannot attempt to address in any detail family breakdown, poor housing or unemployment: nonetheless, we have proceeded in the hope that our work might make some contribution to improving one of the social problems which impair people's lives.

(51). We have deliberately cast our net wide. The crime problems associated with alcohol abuse cannot be dissociated from the other problems which abuse causes: the root of the disease lies in the failure of society to adopt sensible drinking habits, and so the solution must involve changes in attitudes rather than an obsession with regulation. Our recommendations cover a wide range of health, social, and educational provision which are at least as important as those relating to the law. They affect a large number of groups — parents, teachers, social workers, probation officers, the courts, the police, local government, central government, the health service — because almost every organisation and individual in our society has a part to play in combatting alcohol abuse. The notion that people should be allowed to abuse alcohol as they please, leaving it to the health and criminal justice services to pick up the pieces, is not acceptable, nor will it lead to a solution.

(52). For reasons of time, we have concentrated upon identifying the problems caused by alcohol abuse among the young, and making suggestions for remedying them, rather than examining why the problems arise. It is unlikely that any single factor is responsible for the rise in alcohol consumption among young people. The rise has occurred at a time when per capita consumption generally has been rising, and it seems likely that the young are imitating their elders. The rise in affluence among some sections of the young has also contributed though many disadvantaged young people also turn to alcohol, despite financial problems. Peer pressure is regularly mentioned in studies of young people and alcohol, and there is evidence from studies of undergraduates of socially sanctioned rituals which encourage heavy drinking. Alcohol is frequently used for its drug effects: it can alter the drinker's perception of the world and, temporarily, alleviate unpleasant feelings. Adolescents

commonly experience marked feelings of insecurity, self-doubt, and sexual inadequacy: it is hardly surprising that some of them resort to alcohol as a remedy. Further research is needed into young people's drinking motivation and, in particular, into identifying where possible reasons for and particular patterns of drinking which appear to be especially associated with alcohol-related problems.

(53). We have grouped our recommendations under a series of headings: education; advertising; taxation; the needs of ethnic minorities; statutory and voluntary welfare services; and improving the law. The recommendations should be seen as a package of measures to help the community, and especially young people, to use alcohol sensibly or, if they fail to do this, to provide them with support to overcome their problems.

The approach to sensible drinking

(54). Readers should be aware that opinion about alcohol consumption *in general* differed between members of the Group, as might be expected given the variety of our backgrounds. Some believed that total abstinence was the most desirable approach, while others favoured "moderate drinking" (the definition of which varies from person to person). Without renouncing our different opinions on this matter, we decided for the purpose of this report to work on the basis of two assumptions:

- (i) that, whether or not total abstinence is a desirable goal, it is unrealistic in the present social climate to attempt to achieve it by law, or to promote it as the only answer to alcohol abuse: our recommendations are therefore directed towards encouraging a more sensible attitude to alcohol, one approach to which is abstinence;
- (ii) that the definition of "moderate drinking" is an issue best left to medical expertise: we note, however, the Health Education Council's advice that 21 units per week for men, 14 for women, are the limits for "sensible drinking", and that 35 units per week for men, 21 units for women, are the limits for "safe drinking".

We are encouraged by the fact that, despite our different approaches to and interests in this subject, we have been able to agree upon a wide range of recommendations.

Education

(55). The law sets the parameters for socially acceptable behaviour: but it cannot explain the reasons why alcohol consumption needs to be regulated for the good of society and the individual. That is the role of education.

(56). Alcohol education must take account of the influences of the society in which it is taught. Alcohol abuse is often seen as secondary to, and in some sense preferable to, other forms of drug abuse: this is not the case. Alcohol abuse accounts for *ten times the number of young people's deaths caused by illicit drug abuse*. For that reason, alcohol education should form part of a broad approach to drug education. We are concerned that alcohol education appears to have fallen from prominence as a result of the current campaigns against other forms of drug abuse and AIDS. While we accept that there is a limit to the number of health education campaigns which can be effective at any one time, we consider that the level of funding and effort which has gone into public education about alcohol is disproportionately low, and a reflection of misconceptions about the scale of the alcohol problem.

We therefore recommend that the Government should re-examine its health education priorities in order to make them meet more closely the scale of the alcohol abuse problem.

Units of alcohol
In this report, we make reference to "units of alcohol". The unit is not an exact measure, but it is a useful means of comparing the alcohol content of common measures of alcoholic drinks.

1 unit is equivalent to:
½ pint of ordinary beer, cider or lager (strong varieties may contain 2 units or even more)
1 glass of table wine
1 (single) measure of spirits (1/6 gill)
1 small glass of sherry or fortified wine

(57). School education is the most important formal means by which society gives its members the information necessary to avoid all kinds of dangers. Alcoholic drink is a prevalent feature of contemporary western life; misused it is highly dangerous, and can be fatal. It is therefore clearly important that every member of society should have a clear understanding of the hazards involved in alcohol misuse, and the ways in which they can be avoided.

(58). It is naive to believe that, on its own, school education can cure the alcohol problems faced by society. However successfully teachers convey to their pupils the facts about alcohol, children will be faced with the familiar contradictions and hypocrisies which complicate childhood: they will see a society which preaches control but practises abandon; which spends hundreds of millions promoting the misleading images which it attempts to counter with a million or two; and which profits from the very excesses which it deplures but does very little to curb. It is easy to blame this upon governments or brewers: while they must share some of the blame, their behaviour is in part governed by the attitudes which society as a whole permits: drunken drivers are not censured; parents do little to control the drinking of their children; electors deplore rises in alcohol taxation. The voice of the teacher will only be heard effectively when the din of contradictory messages has been brought under control. For that reason, we repeat the message that our various recommendations must be seen as parts of a *package* to enable society to consider and deal with alcohol abuse more rationally.

(59). With the appointment of health education officers, drug co-ordinators, and designated advisers and inspectors with responsibility for health and social education, the infrastructure to support the development of alcohol education in schools already exists. We welcome the abundance of teaching materials produced by the Health Education Authority, the Teachers' Advisory Council for Alcohol and Drug Education (TACADE), the Brewers' Society, and some of the larger retailers of alcohol.

(60). Despite this growth of health education support and learning materials, we were concerned that, with no nationally agreed teaching programme, the form and content of alcohol education varied considerably from school to school. **We recommend that local education authorities should review the adequacy of their alcohol and other drug education programmes. We believe that such programmes should reflect the diversity of cultural backgrounds of pupils and their families, which may have widely differing attitudes to alcohol. We are alarmed that the recently published Government proposals for a national curriculum fail to acknowledge the central importance of health and social education programmes in schools. We urge the Government to ensure that health education is given proper prominence in the national curriculum.**

(61). We are concerned that, even where resource support is good, teachers may not receive appropriate in-service training: this can lead to spasmodic and unstructured health education. **We recommend that appropriate in-service training for health education should be made available: this in-service training should include sessions to help teachers to understand their own attitudes towards alcohol.**

Primary school education

(62). In recent years there has been a growing awareness that, since many forms of behaviour and attitudes needed for a healthy adult life are established in early childhood, formal health education needs to begin at primary school. It is significant

that children as young as 6 understand the difference between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages; and it is important to realise that, even at that age, they are already being exposed to the promotion of alcoholic drink in the media.

(63). One of the advantages in planning the curriculum for the primary age range is that each class has its own teacher who works with the same children for much of the day. The lack of a formal timetable, pressures of examinations, or the need to change classrooms, allows the teacher freedom in planning. Health education in the primary school can therefore adopt cross-curricular strategies, involve role-playing, story-telling, and writing, and enable children to explore knowledge and reflect upon their beliefs in the course of day-to-day activities which are non-threatening.

(64). One means of reducing the contradictory messages to which we have referred is to ensure the involvement of parents in health education. Parents can reinforce (or, unfortunately, undermine) good school messages. Research suggests that parents' drinking habits are one of the most important influences in shaping young people's drinking styles. Encouraging parents to become involved in alcohol education is also an indirect way of changing adult attitudes to alcohol. **We therefore welcome the programme "Health Education — Drugs and the Primary School Child" (published by TACADE) which provides material for teachers, pupils (aged 9-11), and their parents, and exploits the potential for a partnership between teachers and parents; and Alcohol Concern's "Alcohol and Your Children: a parents' guide"; and we recommend that the role of parents in educating their children against alcohol abuse is given proper prominence in future education programmes.**

Secondary school education

(65). By the time young people reach secondary education, it is likely that they will have established certain attitudes towards alcoholic drink. Nevertheless, as they enter the period when they are most likely to be confronted by their first experience of illicit drinking, and as they move towards the age when they are socially expected, and legally permitted, to take drink in pubs and other places, there is a continuing need for alcohol education. Such education must take into account the environments in which their pupils live if it is to be flexible enough to help pupils to come to sensible decisions: for example, it must recognise that some pupils may already be regular alcohol drinkers, while others have yet to face the decision about whether, and if so how much and when, to drink alcohol.

(66). One example of the material available to secondary schools is the comprehensive Alcohol Education Syllabus for 11-19 year-olds, produced by TACADE and the Health Education Authority. This syllabus covers society's attitudes to alcohol, reasons for alcohol use, facts about alcohol, and the law and the media; and, at the personal level, encourages young people to look at alcohol and interpersonal relationships, and society's influence upon their own attitudes.

(67). Other social education programmes — some aimed specifically at the younger or older secondary school student — include education about alcohol as a central component. TACADE's "Skills for Adolescence", for example, assists people in the 11-14 age range to develop the skills and self-confidence which will help them through their teenage years, and to take their own decisions about alcohol despite peer-group pressure.

68. We are concerned that neither primary nor secondary school teachers are represented on the new Health Education Authority. In the light of the points we have made above, we believe this to be absurd, and **we recommend that the DHSS should give urgent consideration to the appointment of serving teachers from the primary and secondary sectors to the new Authority.**

Advertising and the role of the media

(69). Whatever messages are promoted by schools, parents and peer groups, the media plays an important role in shaping people's attitudes to the use of alcohol. This fact is recognised by the special controls placed upon the advertising of alcoholic drinks on television, in the press, and on hoardings. For television, the Independent Broadcasting Authority has established a code for the advertising of alcohol; and for the other media, a similar code has been produced by the Advertising Standards Authority. Amongst other things, these codes forbid advertisements showing solitary drinking, drinking by those apparently under 25, or advertisements which associate drinking with sexual or social success, or which promote the attractions of high-strength drinks.

(70). Having reviewed a number of advertisements, the Group does not believe that these codes are effective. While judgments in this area are likely to be difficult, it was clear to us that a number of the advertisements which we saw promoted alcohol as a drink for virile young men; others used young women in sexually provocative poses. Given the association between young males, excessive drinking, and crime, is it clear to us that such advertising is undesirable.

(71). To some extent, advertisers are placed in an impossible position: they are permitted to advertise alcoholic drinks, but told to avoid the very techniques which are most likely to make advertising successful. Advertising must attempt to make its product look attractive: and anything which makes alcohol look attractive is open to the criticism that it is encouraging a habit which has harmful effects. This problem reflects society's ambivalent attitude towards alcohol and alcohol abuse.

(72). Elsewhere in Europe, most countries which have commercial television place controls on the advertising of alcoholic drinks. In Austria and the Republic of Ireland, only beer and wine may be advertised, while in Finland and Spain there is a ban on advertising alcoholic beverages over a certain strength. Other countries, most recently France, have imposed bans upon alcohol advertising. We have received representations from the Brewers' Society suggesting that there is no evidence that alcohol advertising increases the consumption of alcohol: given the prevalence of alcohol advertising, proof either way is probably impossible, but we believe that the huge sums currently spent upon alcohol advertising, and the nature of the advertisements, help to create the climate in which alcohol is seen as an indispensable adjunct to almost all social occasions. The existing voluntary ban on spirit advertising on television appears to acknowledge the potentially harmful effect of television advertising of alcohol, and it is illogical to single out one category of alcoholic drinks when all forms of such drinks may lead to the problems associated with abuse. **On balance, given the scale of the problems caused by alcohol abuse, the Group concluded that television and cinema advertising of all alcoholic drinks should be banned.**

(73). Additionally, brewers and other alcoholic drinks manufacturers could demonstrate their commitment to reducing the problems of alcohol abuse by promoting more heavily the various non-alcoholic drinks which are becoming increasingly available: we acknowledge that some manufacturers have already made welcome moves in this direction. We have heard a number of complaints about

the expense of non-alcoholic drinks in pubs. **We recommend that the alcoholic and soft drinks industries should make a concerted effort to promote these drinks as an attractive alternative to alcohol (not only for drivers), and to ensure that the profit margin on these and other soft drinks is no greater than for alcoholic drinks.**

(74). Advertising is not the only means by which the supposed centrality of alcohol to social success is emphasised. We were disturbed by figures showing the frequency with which alcohol consumption is portrayed during television programmes. **We recommend that the broadcasting authorities monitor the portrayal of alcohol consumption, with a view to ensuring that such consumption is not given a disproportionate weight, and that the acceptability of non-alcoholic drinks on social occasions is given sufficient prominence.**

(75). The Group also considered whether alcoholic drinks, like cigarettes, should carry a Government health warning. Although we have no evidence to show whether such health warnings are effective, **we concluded that, since at worst such warnings are likely to be harmless, and at best they will encourage greater awareness of the harmful consequences of drinking alcohol, the Government should consider their introduction.**

Alcohol taxation

(76). The brewing industry and the media are not the only controllers of the way in which alcohol is presented to the consumer. Taxation represents a considerable proportion of the price of alcoholic drinks, and the Government cannot avoid its responsibility to use the mechanism in a socially responsible way. We have not looked in any depth at the scope for using price as a means of reducing excessive drinking amongst young people: the effects of price changes upon consumption habits are complex. We were, however, struck by two areas in which the Government might use the taxation system to encourage more sensible drinking, and so, we hope, reduce alcohol-related crime.

(77). The first of these is beer taxation. As we explained in Section A, there appears to be a close association between beer consumption by young males and certain types of crime. We were especially struck by reports of young people getting "tanked up" on strong beers. One relatively simple means of trying to tackle this problem would be to increase taxation upon *stronger* beers. Although the beer taxation system is already graduated, the bias against stronger beers is not very great; and, because tax is only a proportion of the price of beer, the disincentive to consumers to buy strong beer is low. Accordingly, **we recommend that the Government should consider increasing the tax on stronger beers.** Such a change need not damage the brewers. The aims would be to decrease the consumption of alcohol taken in the form of beer: the quantity of beer consumed could remain unaffected.

(78). The second area is that of cider. Cider is a significant source of alcohol for young people (though drunk less frequently than beer or wine). A number of reports to the Group mentioned cider as a significant cause of drunkenness amongst young people. We are particularly concerned by the continuing belief that cider is a "safe" alcoholic drink for young people: many parents, who would not dream of giving their children beer, offer cider which is frequently very much stronger. Parents appear ignorant of the fact of which many young people are well aware: that cider is a quick and — per unit of alcohol — cheap means of intoxication.

(79). We believe that three things are necessary to counter this problem. First, young people and parents need to be educated about the relative strengths of

all kinds of alcoholic drinks, including cider. Second, all alcoholic drinks should carry a readily comprehensible indication of strength: we understand that alcoholic strengths in percentages will have to be indicated on labels from next year, as the result of an EC directive, and we welcome this move. Finally, taxation on cider should be related to alcoholic strength. At present, cider is taxed at a single rate, which does not reflect differences in strength. Furthermore, the taxation per unit of alcohol at average strength is very much lower than that for beer. On the other hand, we believe that the production costs of cider are very much higher than those for beer. For the purposes of health and crime prevention, the important thing is that the price to the consumer of various alcoholic drinks should be proportionate to the alcoholic strength. **We therefore recommend that the taxation of cider should be changed to increase the duty on high-strength ciders, and so that the price per unit of alcohol to the consumer is brought roughly into line with that for beer.**

Alternative facilities

(80). Even if it were possible with the wave of a wand to empty pubs and clubs of all under-age drinkers, the troubles which are the subject of this report would not be over: the social needs and problems which underlie young people's attendance at licensed premises, and their abuse of alcohol, would remain. Any comprehensive programme to reduce illicit and irresponsible drinking must therefore ask why people drink, and what alternative venues and activities do or should exist to compete with the obvious attractiveness to young people of drinking in pubs and in public places.

(81). Last year's Working Group on Violence Associated with Licensed Premises found plausible the suggestion that many young people go to licensed premises primarily for social reasons rather than because alcohol is on sale. The experience of our Group, and evidence we received from taped interviews with young people, supports the view: the pub is often the only acceptable meeting place. We also found that many young people who drink in groups in public places do so in response to boredom developing during long periods without constructive activities — school holidays or unemployment, for example.

(82). At paragraph 105 below we mention the part played by youth service projects which endeavour to supply constructive alternatives to the excitement that young people get from drinking alcohol. Another approach to the problem is the provision of alcohol-free bars which furnish the atmosphere of the pub or night-club. Notable examples of such bars include:

The Pop Inn — Manchester

a soft-drinks only pub for 12-18 year-olds, opened in October 1986 and run by the Church of England Council for Social Aid with funding from Whitbread and the Manpower Services Commission. The club attracts about 200 people each evening. The police believe that, by taking young people off the streets, the bar has brought about a reduction in disorder, petty theft, and criminal damage.

West One — Welwyn Garden City

a popular purpose-built disco, established in October 1986, with one under-16s' night (no smoking or alcohol) and one 16-18's night (no alcohol) per week. Door staff relieve customers of cigarettes and alcohol.

Bentley's Nightclub—Stockton on Tees

this nightclub has operated an alcohol-free disco for 14-18 year-olds once a week for the last four years. The disco usually attracts about 500 people, 95% of whom are well behaved, though there is an element who create trouble outside at closing time.

Bentley's Nightclub—Sunderland

a sister-club of the Stockton club, this operates a weekly alcohol-free disco for about 1,000 14-18 year-olds. Established to break young people's progression from illicit off-licence purchases to pubs and night-clubs.

Parrot and Palm Club—Worthing

some of us visited this club. It was opened in June 1984 by Mr Tim Mason, a youth worker concerned about the trend towards heavier drinking by younger and younger age-groups. The club has a maximum capacity of 150, and its membership is open to people aged 14-25, though most customers are in the 14-19 age-range. Open each evening, the club attracts a cross-section of young people, including some who would otherwise go to pubs. Administered by an adult management committee, it is financed largely by the fund-raising efforts of its members, who also play a full part in running the club.

(83). There are still relatively few such alcohol-free bars in the country, probably no more than 20. Some, such as the Pop Inn, are commercial ventures; others, like the Parrot and Palm, are voluntary bodies. Their popularity with young people is evidence that they perform a useful social function: what is less certain, however, is the extent to which they prevent under-age drinking and alcohol-related crime. The police have some doubts about their efficacy in these areas. It seems that for some young people who already make visits to licensed premises—i.e. those most at risk—alcohol-free clubs have no lasting allure, while others undermine the alcohol-free ethos by having their fill of alcoholic drink before they arrive.

(84). Further research into the effects of these bars is called for. There seems little doubt, however, that alcohol-free clubs and discos can be run as successful commercial ventures—there is certainly no shortage of existing facilities, such as youth clubs, which could be refurbished to make them more attractive to young people. We believe that they could be effective in reducing under-age drinking and crime if provided in sufficient number and variety, and in conjunction with the firmer enforcement of the licensing laws and the educational measures which we call for elsewhere in this report. **We call upon the alcoholic drinks industry to build upon its existing work against alcohol abuse by providing the resources to set up a wide range of alcohol-free facilities in co-operation with local agencies and the community, and to evaluate their effectiveness.**

Alcohol abuse and ethnic minorities

(85). We have already commented that alcohol abuse is a universal human problem: no group in society can abuse alcohol and get away with it. Our aim in writing this report has been to recommend a series of educational, social, and legal measures to lessen the risks of alcohol problems and their consequences. However, in making these recommendations we have recognised that there are ways in which the circumstances of alcohol abusers vary, which in turn require different kinds of help.

(86). Some members of ethnic minority communities may experience a variety of pressures which make them especially vulnerable to the problems of alcohol

abuse: in addition to the pressures faced by all young people, young members of ethnic minority groups may also face racial attacks and abuse, discrimination in employment, linguistic difficulties, and tensions between their own and the majority community's culture. All these factors may create the conditions under which the slide into alcohol abuse occurs.

(87). These factors can be divided into two classes: deep-seated social problems resulting from prejudice and other causes; and cultural factors. The first are beyond the remit and capacity of this Group; the second, however, may be catered for if those providing education and support services are aware of the different needs of different communities.

(88). In the short time available, we were not able to undertake a wide-ranging study of the alcohol abuse problems of the various minority communities in this country: we believe that considerably more attention should be given to this area. However, one of our members has considerable experience working with the Asian communities on alcohol abuse, and we were impressed by the evidence of the difficulties faced by Asian communities in coming to terms with their alcohol problems. While generalisations may be dangerous, we think it may be worth outlining what has been reported to us as a typical experience of an Asian family arriving in this country.

(89). The family may come from a community in which alcohol is rarely consumed and not widely available. They have little if any experience of alcoholism, or even moderate social drinking. Suddenly, the family is placed in a society in which alcohol accompanies almost all social occasions; in which it is freely available from retail outlets; and in which earnings generally provide enough disposable income to allow for at least some alcohol consumption. These factors alone are dangerous; added to them may be the feeling of isolation in a foreign country, perhaps heightened by a poor command of the language. Women in particular may suffer from a lack of formal education, be expected to remain at home, and hence be especially liable to feel alone and depressed.

(90). Of course, most Asian families do not develop these problems: they may remain abstainers, or they may adopt sensible drinking habits and avoid abuse. Difficulties may, however, occur in the second generation, if young Asian people feel a conflict between the traditions of their parents' background and the Western culture in which they find themselves. The consumption of alcohol may become a symbol of rebellion against what they see as the restrictive traditions of their parents.

(91). The evidence we have from West London suggests that alcohol abuse is a very considerable problem in the Asian community; and our evidence almost certainly underestimates the problem. Young Asian men appear to be particularly heavy drinkers, and we have anecdotal evidence that they tend to consume large quantities of the stronger beers and spirits. One of the difficulties in tackling alcohol abuse is the reluctance of many families to admit the problem. This obstacle is common to all groups in our society, but the sense of bringing shame upon the family by admitting an alcohol problem appears to be especially acute in the Asian community, and is exacerbated by a lack of knowledge about where to turn for help. Asian wives with alcoholic — sometimes violent — husbands are particularly reluctant to seek outside help.

(92). To try to tackle this problem, the Accept organisation — which runs local alcohol counselling services across the country — has established an ethnic minority counselling service in Hounslow, funded by Hounslow Borough Council. It has only three full-time staff, the co-ordinator/counsellor, a researcher, and an

administrative assistant: both the co-ordinator and assistant come from Asian backgrounds, and therefore have an understanding of the cultures and some of the languages of their Asian clients. To help the counsellor with his work, volunteer counsellors, also with knowledge of Asian languages, have been recruited, and a training programme for them has been established. For many clients, the ability to talk about their alcohol problem in their mother tongue to someone with an understanding of their background is essential to receiving help. Some clients are referred by hospitals, doctors, and companies: others seek help themselves. Where possible, counselling is undertaken with husband and wife together.

(93). Publicising the service has required the translation of Accept booklets into Asian languages, and it is hoped that there will soon be more publicity specifically designed for Asian audiences. One difficulty is that a proportion of Asian women are not only unable to communicate in English, but are also illiterate in their own languages: this should be a temporary problem, as their children receive full-time education, but it is nonetheless important that these women are given access to information on alcohol abuse. For this reason, the Accept ethnic minority counselling service undertakes talks to ethnic minority organisations, to try to spread information about the dangers of alcohol abuse, and about the sources of help available.

(94). Some people with advanced alcohol problems need the services of a dry house. Dry houses offer supervised accommodation to people learning to live without alcohol: clients are gradually eased back into the community as they gain confidence in their ability to remain sober. Some Asian people find it difficult to cope in ordinary dry houses, due to cultural differences, and are therefore unable to benefit from them. It seems to us that it is very important that such people should have access to dry houses in which they feel able to face their alcohol problems.

(95). We are confident that, as new generations of Asian people are born, brought up, and educated in this country, their special problems relating to alcohol will disappear; but this may be a long process, and in the meantime it is vital that education and counselling to meet their needs are made available. The present provision appears to be grossly inadequate to meet the demand, and **we therefore recommend the following measures:**

- (i) **that funds should be made available to establish a national ethnic minorities counselling unit, to provide on a national basis the kinds of services provided at present by the Hounslow Accept Ethnic Counselling Network. This unit, which might need funding for a 5-7 year programme, would train people to undertake alcohol abuse counselling and education work in local ethnic minority communities; those trained should have a good knowledge of ethnic minority cultures and languages;**
- (ii) **that literature on sensible drinking and alcohol abuse, tailored to the cultural requirements of different groups, is made available in the main ethnic minority languages and in English (since many younger members of ethnic minorities may, while retaining many of their cultural traditions, only speak English): this literature should be designed both to help adults drink sensibly, and solve abuse problems, and to help parents to educate their children (parents unused to alcohol find it hard to promote sensible drinking in their children);**

(iii) that dry houses, catering for members of ethnic minority communities who would have difficulties in benefitting from the ordinary provision, should be established;

(iv) hospitals should be asked to encourage Asian patients with alcohol and drug-related problems to see alcohol counsellors while in hospital, and advise them to follow up support programmes with the ethnic minorities counselling network (see recommendation (i) above) or a similar agency near their homes.

Although these recommendations have been formulated on the basis of evidence from the Asian communities, we believe that they may have application to other minority communities: further study is required.

The role of the probation and social services

(96). Many young people's alcohol problems are only identified when they come into contact with the criminal justice system. It is often difficult for the courts to extricate the problems emanating from drink and other factors when dealing with young offenders; and in cases where there is a clear need for skilled treatment of an alcohol problem, courts are often frustrated by a lack of suitable facilities, and are forced to discharge, imprison, or fine an offender—none of which may be a satisfactory option.

(97). The probation service plays a vital role in identifying alcohol problems, and in suggesting suitable treatment. In the past, offenders were referred to Alcoholics Anonymous, specialised hospital facilities, and detoxification centres, as available, but in recent years there has been a tremendous growth both in recognising the problem in reports prepared for the courts, and in the provision of a wide range of educationally based activities which are clearly seen as alternatives to custody. These range from informal discussion groups to structured alcohol education courses for young people. In some areas, courses for drunken driving offenders are offered, and are made a condition of probation orders.

(98). There is also work done with those in custody. The probation service has to prepare Home Circumstances Reports for prisoners about to be released, and it is clearly important that these reports take account of the needs of offenders with alcohol problems. (The role of the prison service is discussed in paragraphs 127 — 132)

(99). The probation service's work is not restricted to dealing with those who come before the courts. It is also involved with a wide range of diversionary measures which, in addition to helping to overcome people's alcohol problems, also reduces the load upon the criminal justice system. Examples of this work include:

- day centres for recidivists and others, to provide flexible care for those with alcohol and other problems;
- wet shelters, providing overnight shelter and basic care, support, and supervision for drunkenness offenders who would otherwise have to be kept in police cells, and might face charges. The Service sees such shelters as a constructive way of dealing with drunken people in the community, and is disappointed that Home Office funding has ceased. Funding finished in 1986 after the Government concluded that wet shelters were probably not a cost-effective way of dealing with drunkenness offenders outside the criminal justice system;

- work with Councils of Alcoholism, community alcohol teams (to which some probation officers have been seconded), voluntary agencies, the Health Service and the police to develop educational courses and facilities — in Greater Manchester, for example, a detoxification centre, day centre, and hostel are being built in collaboration with Turning Point, and with financial help from Guinness.

(100). We have been impressed by the scope, flexibility, and imaginative range of the work being done by the probation service, but it is clear that this has been done by the judicious use of existing resources and skills. In addition, some of the developments referred to above are limited to certain areas of the country, and more comprehensive facilities should be developed. We believe that, if young people with alcohol problems are not to become persistent offenders, and become regular inmates of the prison system, it is essential that probation officers and social workers are properly trained to deal with alcohol abuse, and that community-based facilities exist which the courts recognise as alternatives to custody. The subject of alcohol abuse in young offenders needs to be considered as part of a local strategy on offending by young people, developed by the probation service with other concerned agencies. Accordingly, **we recommend that:**

- (i) **greater emphasis be given to alcohol abuse training in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work, and in in-service training;**
- (ii) **the Government should consider a modest injection of additional resources to develop further community-based alternatives for young offenders with alcohol problems.**
- (iii) **probation committees should assess management strategies for implementing policies designed to address local problems;**
- (iv) **probation services, as well as social services, would benefit from the identification of specialist workers who can inform, educate, and support colleagues in this complex area of work with alcohol problems.**

(101). The Group was surprised to find that, with a few exceptions, there is little provision by social services specifically for young offenders with alcohol problems. On the periphery of the problem there is some involvement in multi-disciplinary advisory groups, and in educational programmes for Intermediate Treatment schemes; and there is fairly widespread grant-aided support for local voluntary organisations specialising in the problem. In a few authorities, there is a direct contribution through participation in Community Alcohol Teams, and the provision of counselling services at day centres and hostels for single men, but these authorities are exceptions.

(102). This low level of involvement is due to several factors: social services departments have no defined powers or duties to tackle alcohol misuse; many (though by no means all) of the young people who come before the courts are dealt with by the probation service rather than the social services; alcohol misusers are unlikely to see statutory agencies as a source of help; and social services departments' resources are often stretched by the provision of statutory services. One of the most significant factors in determining primary care workers' engagement in work with alcohol abusers appears to be whether their organisation considers such work to be part of their job.

(103). Nonetheless, there seems to be a growing awareness of a need to develop a composite policy — involving other statutory and non-statutory agencies — to enable social services departments to take a more prominent role in dealing with alcohol misuse. Unlike the probation service, social workers may have knowledge about families with no history of criminal activity, but where alcohol abuse is likely to lead to crime. It is important that this knowledge is available to other agencies dealing with the problem. Our recommendation on the syllabus for the CQSW (see paragraph (100) above) should improve the awareness of social workers of the need to participate fully in local strategies to deal with the crime and other problems arising from alcohol misuse.

The work of the Youth Service

(104). We have described the role of the main statutory services — educational, social, probation — in dealing with the problems caused by alcohol abuse in young people; but it is clear that there are many young people for whom these services are inappropriate. Where alcohol abuse is simply one symptom of a wide range of problems — family breakdown, unemployment, a bad environment, low attainment, and poor self-esteem — young people may be unresponsive to the traditional services of a society with which they feel little identity.

(105). In these circumstances, the Youth Service has a particularly important role. The "Youth Service" describes a wide range of local provision: voluntary grant-aided clubs; voluntary self-help organisations which run themselves without a paid leader; uniformed organisations such as the scouts and guides; youth clubs, often run by the churches or other religious or secular organisations; and statutory youth clubs and centres with paid workers funded by the Youth Service.

(106). Most of the Youth Service's work is not specifically targetted at young people with particular problems; but some of its clients suffer from a variety of social and personal problems, including alcohol abuse. Young people misusing alcohol can benefit from three broad categories of youth service work: *education, prevention and intervention*. We examine these in turn.

Prevention and education

(107). Preventive strategies aim to divert young people from, amongst other dangers, alcohol abuse, by making contact and providing constructive alternative activities. An example of this kind of work is that done by Artskills in Merseyside, which offers a centre for arts-work to involve young people in creative activities, coupled with a team of detached youth workers making contact with young people in the streets. Youth Aid in Lewisham provides counselling and advisory services using "drop-in" sessions, group activities, and detached work, paying attention to the particular needs of ethnic minorities and young women.

(108). These sorts of projects offer assistance to young people who do not always use, or have access to, other more traditional provision. They may prefer the environment of the street. In these circumstances they may be more at risk of alcohol and other forms of drug abuse (though it is important not to confuse different forms of street culture: for example, the strong Afro-Caribbean tradition of street culture is quite different from the sense of alienation and failure which can lead young people to take to the streets and be exposed to danger).

(109). The Youth Service often provides education for people who, for whatever reason, have not responded to school teaching. The education includes not only information on the dangers of misuse, but also education on social skills, decision making, the effects of peer-group pressure, and the clarification of values.

(110). A further example of this work is the Youthlink/Cylchifanc project in Wales, funded for two years by the Department of Education and Science and Welsh Office, but now terminated due to lack of funds. The project, run by young people with the help of a project officer, has used small groups of workers and young people to evolve and evaluate the use of creative arts, particularly drama, in order to educate young people about the dangers of alcohol, solvent and drug misuse. The project reports success in creating an environment in which young people can learn about, and discuss freely, the problems of alcohol and other forms of abuse, and examine their own and others' motives: it has been helpful in building up its members self-esteem. Another project in Warwickshire will offer counselling and social facilities away from licensed premises, and, it is hoped, facilities for creative art and sport. **We recommend that the benefits from improved health and crime reduction which may result from these imaginative types of projects should be taken into account when decisions about their funding are made.**

Crisis Intervention

(111). Crisis intervention, as its name suggests, deals with those already in serious trouble and in need of immediate assistance. The Kaleidoscope Youth and Community Project in Kingston-upon-Thames offers hostel accommodation, a programme of certificated courses, and an all-night club with drop-in medical service.

Difficulties

(112). In undertaking this work, youth workers are faced with a number of difficulties. Funding is a constant problem. In order not to condone alcohol abuse, many youth workers ban alcohol from youth clubs, but this often results in a group of young people — perhaps the very ones in most need of help — leaving the club and drinking elsewhere. Shortage of staff makes it impossible for the youth workers to run the club *and* provide outreach workers to contact those outside. An encouraging development has been the awarding of some Educational Support Grants to local authorities who are providing youth facilities combined with outreach workers. We believe that a combination of centre-based, outreach, and detached workers is very important if the young people at risk from alcohol abuse are to be reached, and **we recommend that such projects should be favourably considered for central Government and other funding, bearing in mind the costs to individuals and society arising from alcohol abuse.**

(113). Leisure centres may also be an important community facility. They provide opportunities for people of all ages, but especially the young, to engage in socially acceptable and satisfying activities at low cost. While such centres will never replace the pub as a focus for social activity, they may represent an attractive alternative as a place to meet, and schools can encourage children to use them from an early age. If leisure centres include bars there is, of course, a danger that they will become an alternative focus of alcohol abuse.

(114). We are well aware of the many conflicting demands upon Government resources. However, we are disturbed by reports that under-funding in the Youth Service inhibits its role. **We recommend that there should be further funding for the following aspects of the Youth Service:**

- (i) *training*: youth workers need training in the problems not only of young people's alcohol abuse, but also their own attitudes to alcohol;
- (ii) *facilities*: tatty youth facilities are hardly likely to offer an attractive alternative to the pub, especially for those young people who are seeking for symbols of success and acceptance. Better facilities, including more leisure centres, are needed;

- (iii) *staffing resources*: many youth workers have to spend their valuable time in fund-raising. The funding of more part-time workers might be a more cost-effective means of doing this, leaving youth workers free to use their counselling skills.

Inter-agency approaches to the problem of young people and alcohol

(115). One of the features of crime prevention work is that it tends to involve the responsibility of a variety of local agencies. We have already referred to the roles of the police, courts, brewers, licensees, parents, and schools in tackling the problem of alcohol abuse by young people. Much of the co-operation between these groups is on an *ad hoc* basis, as needs dictate; but there is also a need for more formal, comprehensive policies to devise strategies.

(116). The statutory and non-statutory agencies can benefit each other's work. For example, the Youth Service may be able to provide support to a young person in ways in which the probation service, because of its statutory duties, is unable: young people may turn to the Youth Service for support and encouragement to enable them to meet the legal requirement to attend a probation service group. Youth workers, social workers, and probation officers can work in multi-disciplinary teams, benefiting from each other's skills. The interaction between these various groups can also help to ensure that a full picture of the young person, and the pressures that he or she may be under, is available before any decisions are taken. For example, in the preparation of social enquiry reports (which may be crucial in determining whether a young person is sentenced to custody), it is important that recommendations are not influenced by preconceptions based upon a person's ethnic origins or sex.

(117). We were pleased to receive evidence from the Greater Manchester Police Authority, which decided to commission a report on the question of young people and alcohol, since members of the Authority were becoming increasingly concerned about the part which alcohol appeared to play in offences committed by young people. In drawing up the report, the Authority consulted a wide range of interested agencies in the public and private sectors, and sought the views of the police-community liaison panels in the area.

(118). The report did not restrict itself to issues of purely local concern. It reviewed some research findings on offences linked to alcohol, on the decreasing real cost of alcoholic drinks, and on the increase in the number of licensed premises; it also considered the effect of advertising, and the portrayal of drinking on television, concluding that the habit of drinking alcohol was persistently reinforced by images.

(119). The report then reviewed the existing activity to combat the problem in Greater Manchester. The North Western Regional Health Authority and the Health Education Authority have jointly funded a three-year programme entitled "Drink Wisely North West", in close co-operation with the Greater Manchester and Lancashire Council on Alcohol. Its main aim is to reduce alcohol abuse, and promote sensible drinking. Before starting the campaign, the organisers undertook a survey throughout the North-Western region to seek people's knowledge of, attitudes to, and behaviour in relation to alcohol: the purpose of this was both to establish the nature of the problem, and to provide a base-line against which changes resulting from the campaign could be measured. A competition was used to seek information and ideas from members of the public, as a result of which a guide to sensible drinking was published; a nationwide survey was also undertaken, which showed considerable support for firmer laws on alcohol abuse, especially restrictions on drinking and driving and the advertising of alcoholic drinks. The second phase of the campaign, which is now under way, will target women and young people.

(120). An alcohol education project using the "whole school" approach (5-19 year-olds), with parental involvement, is to be launched in one district; other initiatives with schools are planned, including a theatre-based alcohol education programme. Further work includes: the appointment of an officer to implement alcohol policies in industry; a working group with the North Western Brewers' Association to encourage sensible drinking, the promotion of non-alcoholic drinks; and the monitoring of the images of alcohol portrayed in television programmes and advertisements, public places, and magazines.

(121). The Greater Manchester and Lancashire Council on Alcohol has been working with the probation service and the police. As a result of a survey of offenders with alcohol problems, the Council now works with Greater Manchester and Lancashire Probation Services to provide in-service training, and is now preparing training courses for probationer police officers. Courses for young offenders in penal institutions have been run, although unfortunately resources problems in the establishments has forced their suspension.

(122). This work in Greater Manchester and Lancashire is being pursued. Other projects to counter alcohol abuse exist. In Coventry, the local chamber of commerce, police, local authority, brewers and licensees, and other agencies, have formed a steering committee to tackle the problems of alcohol-related city centre crime. A further project in Newport, under the auspices of the Welsh Office, is looking at similar problems there. In both cases, the problems caused by and to young people by alcohol abuse will be a focus of activity.

(123). All these projects are at a relatively early stage, though the Group is encouraged that agencies are now getting together, recognising their responsibilities and the need for co-operation. The range of agencies involved is apparent from the brief descriptions of the projects given. We are concerned, however, that these projects are dependent upon a concerned agency in a particular area choosing to take the lead, rather than upon the exercise of a generally recognised responsibility.

(124). In the drugs field, many Regional and District Health Authorities have established drug abuse committees: alcohol, too, is a dangerous drug, and demands at least as much attention as the others. Although many different groups and interests are concerned in the field of alcohol abuse, we should like to see one agency in each area with designated responsibility for at least launching a co-ordinated local inter-agency campaign to examine and tackle alcohol abuse problems in its area.

(125). The Group recommends that each Regional Health Authority should include in its health promotion policy the problems caused by alcohol abuse among young people, and set down general guidelines for District Health Authorities. Each District could then consider its problems and decide what action is appropriate to meet its particular circumstances. This consideration would need to be undertaken in conjunction with the police, probation service, social services, youth service, representatives of the licensed trade, or others in the private or voluntary sectors.

(126). The Group believes that many areas — not just urban ones — may suffer from crime problems caused by poor facilities for young people and a failure to apply the law. The Government cannot impose national solutions to deal with local problems, but **we recommend that it should take the initiative in encouraging and guiding co-ordinated local action involving all sections of the community.**

Alcohol education in custodial establishments

(127). We have already referred to the high proportion of young people in custody who have some kind of drink problem (see paragraphs (11 and 12)). Clearly, young offenders in custody must be a major target group in any programme to reduce alcohol-related crime, and they are a pre-selected and captive audience for alcohol education.

(128). Against this are negative factors. First, offenders in custody are not exposed to the temptation to drink: it is therefore impossible to test any good intentions. Second, many young offenders with drink problems have social and psychological problems resulting in a lack of conviction and moral motivation: they have great difficulty in facing up to their problems, and in developing a pattern of drinking and social behaviour rooted in self-respect and consideration for the rights of others.

(129). The tasks of the Home Office Prison Department in relation to young people committed to custody are to provide work, training, and instruction of a kind that will assist offenders to acquire or develop personal resources, interests, and skills; to encourage self-discipline and an acceptance of responsibility; to foster links with the outside community; and to help them return to the community in co-operation with the agencies responsible for their post-release supervision. It is plain that the treatment of any drink problem, and education to overcome ignorance about the consequences of alcohol abuse, will be central to these tasks.

(130). We have received evidence of a variety of alcohol education projects with young offenders. The Prison department's education officers, prison officers, probation officers, chaplains, psychologists, doctors, and members of Alcoholics Anonymous all undertake work in young offender establishments. The work includes individual interviews and group therapy sessions. In some establishments, role-playing exercises seem to have been successful with young offenders. Significant use is made of the material produced by TACADE. The subject of alcohol abuse features in some establishments' social skills and preparation for release courses.

(131). We are well aware of the long-standing difficulties faced by the Prison Service, which have led to the curtailment of a variety of educational and other activities. We hope that the Fresh Start proposals will lead to a situation in which more time becomes available for officers to engage in constructive work with young (and older) offenders.

(132). While recognising these difficulties, we are nonetheless concerned that there appears to be a lack of any central policy for providing alcohol education and counselling in young offender establishments. Given the prevalence of alcohol abuse in young offenders, and the effect this seems to have upon offending patterns, **we recommend that there should be a centrally determined programme for education and counselling in young offender establishments, and that this should be developed in conjunction with those outside agencies who could assist offenders upon their release.**

Improving the law on under-age drinking and its enforcement

(133). We have left the question of the law until last. The aim of crime prevention is to deal with problems before they reach the stage of criminality. However, we have to accept that regulation, and ultimately criminal sanctions, have an important role to play in protecting society from the worst consequences of alcohol abuse; and, more importantly for the purposes of this report, that the law can be an important signal of society's attitudes as to what constitutes reasonable behaviour. The recommendations in the earlier part of this report are designed to reduce crime by moderating consumption amongst the young: but we can scarcely expect the

young to take educational messages seriously if they see that the laws designed to protect them from the problems of alcohol abuse are widely ignored.

(134). For that reason, we have looked at ways of improving the application of the law. We do not pretend to have undertaken an exhaustive study; nor, given the time available to us, would we claim to have been able to foresee every consequence of the changes we propose. What follows are some suggestions as to how we think the law might be strengthened to aid the campaign against alcohol abuse. We hope that the Government will consider them in the course of developing its policies against alcohol abuse.

(135). In Section A, we explained the ways in which the current law regulates the purchase and consumption of alcohol by young people, and suggested that, due to a number of social and legal problems, the law was not effective. This section of our report examines the arguments for changing the law, or the manner of its enforcement, in order to improve its effectiveness.

(136). There may be no grand design behind the various provisions of the current law on under-age drinking, but to decide whether, and if so what, changes should be made, we attempted to define the assumptions upon which they are based.

Is 18 the correct age?

(137). First, we examined the assumption that 18 was the correct age at which to allow the purchase and consumption of alcohol in bars. The fact that 18 is the age of majority (though it was not at the time the minimum drinking age was fixed) gives the present law some logic. On the other hand, the law permits marriage and full-time employment at 16: is it realistic to expect young men and women with jobs (and hence money) and even family responsibilities to be excluded from drinking in licensed premises?

(138). One argument runs that the law is so widely flouted, and the under-18s so difficult to identify, that it would be sensible to recognise the fact by lowering the minimum age for purchase and consumption to, say, 17 or 16. Since the current age was established, the age of puberty has reduced considerably, and there might be advantages in accepting that young people aged 16 or 17 were sufficiently mature to handle alcohol.

(139). The trouble with this argument is that it becomes hard to know where to fix the age: alcohol is a potentially dangerous drug, and it is widely accepted that its purchase and consumption by the young should be regulated for their own protection. If 16 year-olds were permitted to buy alcoholic drinks, a fair proportion of 14 year-olds would probably be able to pass for legal drinkers. Although we have not conducted any research in this area, we suspect that there is no age which is particularly easy to identify, and therefore we have concluded that it would be pointless to change the minimum age simply in order to try to reduce publicans' problems. We also believe that any reduction in the age at which young people could drink in bars, however carefully such a change were presented, would inevitably be seen as condoning more consumption by young people.

(140). We accept that, whatever age is set, there are likely to be breaches. The figures suggest that, in England and Wales, a very sizable proportion (about 20%) of males are drinking regularly in pubs and bars by the time they are 15. It seems likely that any reduction in the minimum drinking age would be followed by at least some reduction in the age at which a sizable proportion of adolescents begins to drink in pubs and bars, and that the current problem of 15 year-olds drinking would be shifted to 14 year-olds if the minimum age were lowered at all. The

prospect of some 20% of 14 year-olds drinking regularly in pubs seems to us to be thoroughly undesirable: its effect upon schooling and crime problems would probably be significant. **We therefore recommend that the present minimum age should not be changed.**

Are the restrictions on consumption and purchase the right ones?

(141). The present law is generally strict in regulating the purchase of alcohol by people under 18, but relatively lax in regulating its consumption. Briefly, the current position can be summarised as:

- (i) strict regulation of purchase and consumption in bars (almost none allowed);
- (ii) strict regulation of off-sales (almost none allowed);
- (iii) almost no regulation of purchase or consumption elsewhere.

The assumptions behind this position seem to be that pubs and bars are hard-drinking or dangerous places into which it would be dangerous to introduce young people; that the purchase of alcohol by young people could lead to dangerous unsupervised drinking; but that drinking elsewhere (and perhaps especially in the home with parental supervision) is not an area into which the law should (or perhaps in practice could) intrude. Are these assumptions justifiable?

(142). It is immediately apparent that the law contains a number of anomalies: a five-year old is legally able to purchase and consume alcohol in a registered club and to purchase wine from a wine warehouse; registered clubs may be just as hard-drinking and rough places as pubs. Although registered clubs are private premises, many sell alcohol in much the same way as pubs, and there seems to us to be no reason why this anomaly should continue. We understand that many clubs already include a ban on purchase and consumption in their rules. We can see no good reason why wine warehouses should be permitted to sell alcohol to the under 18s. Accordingly **we recommend that the purchase or consumption of alcohol in registered clubs and wine warehouses by those under 18 should be subject to the same legal restrictions as in pubs.** To enforce this, it may be necessary to give the police a right of entry to registered clubs for this purpose.

(143). The exceptions which allow restaurants, hotels, and pubs to serve alcohol with meals to people under the age of 18 are complex. It is true that alcohol consumed with a meal has a less intoxicating effect than that drunk on an empty stomach; but the fact that the eating and drinking areas of pubs are often very poorly defined only goes to increase the problems caused by the exception; and although by and large restaurants are quieter places than pubs, it is hard to see why unsupervised young people in restaurants should be able to drink from the age of five.

(144). We are in favour of allowing young people under the age of 18 to be introduced to moderate, sensible drinking: but there is a limit to how flexible the law can be without becoming so complex that it is ignored. In principle, we see the advantages of the flexibility which permits drinking with meals by those under 18 in restaurants, a habit which probably causes problems only on rare occasions; but in practice, we believe that the existence of different minimum ages in different public establishments contributes to the confusion which makes the law difficult to enforce. Furthermore, if the law on under-age drinking were to be tightened up and enforced, as we propose, there is a danger that the problem would be displaced to establishments where drinking of alcohol by the under 18s is legal. With a certain amount of reluctance, we have come to the conclusion that a simplified law, under which 18 is the key age for purchase and public consumption,

is the most effective way of setting the legal framework to protect the young against alcohol abuse and its consequences. **We therefore recommend that the purchase or consumption of alcohol in all parts of licensed premises and in hotels and restaurants by those under 18 should be made illegal.**

(145). During the course of our research, we came across a further law which might be helpful to licensees in preventing drunkenness, and associated crime, by young people and others. First, under section 172 of the Licensing Act 1964, it is an offence for a licensee to sell intoxicating liquor to a drunken person, or to permit drunkenness to take place on the premises: the penalty is a fine. We suggest that more rigorous enforcement of this law would be a useful means of demonstrating the responsibilities of licensees to keep an orderly house. **We recommend that this law be more widely used.**

(146). The basic law on off-sales is relatively straightforward: no one under 18 may purchase alcoholic liquor, though there is an anomaly in that in a registered club members under the age of 18 may purchase off-sales. Our recommendation at paragraph 142 above would remove this anomaly. Otherwise, we do not propose any alteration to the provisions regulating the age at which off-sales may be purchased.

(147). We are, however, concerned that the law preventing sales of alcohol by those under 18 in pubs and bars does not extend to off-licences, or hotels and restaurants. It is significant that off-licenses are cited as a major source of alcohol for teenagers; and it is equally significant that some major retailers insist that staff under the age of 18 may not authorise off-sales, since they recognise the difficulties a 16 or 17 year-old may have in enforcing the law. **We recommend that the law should stipulate that all sales of alcoholic liquor should be made by, or at least effectively supervised by, persons aged 18 or over.** We recognise that this would create some practical difficulties for shops. An adult would have to be available to authorise each alcohol sale, or certain tills with adult operators would need to be designated. However, the possession of an off-licence carries with it important responsibilities, it is not unreasonable to expect off-licensees to provide proper adult supervision to prevent breaches of the law.

(148). There is a further source of nuisance and crime, which causes the police considerable concern. The police report that young people sometimes persuade adults to buy alcohol for them: the money and drink are exchanged at the door of the off-licence. No offence is committed, although the transaction clearly undermines the purpose of the licensing legislation. Framing an offence to deal with this problem may well be difficult. Adults may legitimately buy alcohol for minors (for example, for consumption at home by their teenage children). The problem which needs to be dealt with is that of an adult buying alcohol which will be drunk by unsupervised minors, particularly in public places. An offence which made it illegal for an adult to purchase alcohol for minors in exchange for money or services might go some way to solving the problem. **We recommend that the Government give further thought to dealing with this problem.**

(149). There remains the question of the consumption by under-18s in the home, or in other public places. We do not believe that the law could, or should, impose further restrictions upon drinking in the home. There are already provisions under child care legislation to protect children put in danger by the behaviour of their parents, and these can be used in cases where children are being allowed to drink irresponsibly. Furthermore we believe that there is merit in allowing young people, under the age of 18, to be introduced to alcohol in the supervised setting of the

home. Supervised drinking in the home will only be effective, however, if parents are properly educated in the sensible use of alcohol: see paragraph (64).

(150). We found the question of children drinking in public places a more difficult one. Where children are drunk or disorderly, or commit other offences as a result of intoxication, criminal powers already exist: but there is an argument that permitting children to be seen drinking in public suggests that society tolerates or even encourages under-age drinking. Furthermore, it seems anomalous to forbid young people under 18 to drink alcohol in the relatively supervised setting of the pub, or to buy alcohol at an off-licence, but to allow them to drink as much as they like without any adult control in other public places.

(151). The existing laws regulating drunken and disorderly behaviour are sufficient to deal with problems created by intoxicated young people. We believe, however, that the sight of under 18s drinking openly in public contributes to the other difficulties connected with under-age drinking of alcohol. If — as we believe it should be — the law on under-age drinking of alcohol is there to protect young people from alcohol abuse and its consequences, that protection should not be restricted to licensed premises. We regret the need to impose further restrictions upon the behaviour of young people, but we have concluded that the problem of under-age drinking cannot be tackled seriously if the under-18s remain free to drink alcohol in public places. **We therefore recommend that the drinking of alcohol by those under 18 in public places be made an offence: in making this recommendation, we recognise the friction which might be caused in certain circumstances if the police had to enforce a ban on drinking by the under 18s in public places, and accept that our proposal must be conditional upon the Government being satisfied that such a law could be enforced in a fashion which avoided unnecessary friction or disorder. We understand that Coventry City Council is considering the creation of a bye-law to ban the drinking of alcohol (by all ages) in certain public places in the City: if this bye-law is approved, it might prove a suitable means of assessing the effectiveness and desirability of our proposal.**

Is the law enforceable?

(152). Having considered the various provisions regulating sale and consumption, and recommended changes to reduce the anomalies, we now consider whether changes could be made to make the present law, or the law amended as we suggest, more enforceable.

(153). We have already referred to the difficulty in proving that a licensee, or his or her staff, *knowingly* sold alcohol to or for someone under age. We appreciate the purpose behind this provision, which is to protect licensees from genuine mistakes; but its inclusion in the law not only makes it difficult to secure a conviction, but also implies that the duty of a licensee to verify ages is relatively slight. Licensees are placed in an embarrassing, and sometimes ugly, situation in trying to establish people's ages: it is only human nature that, given the difficulty in securing convictions, they frequently accept an assertion by a customer despite doubts about its truth.

(154). We considered whether the sale or supply of alcohol to or for an under-age customer should be made an absolute offence. Such a measure would undoubtedly be a very effective way of strengthening licensees' resolve to establish the age of doubtfully young customers, and persuading their staff to do so; indeed, some of us considered it the only really effective way. On the other hand, the creation of an absolute offence would catch the licensee who makes a genuine

mistake despite best efforts, in an area where such mistakes are sometimes hard to avoid. On balance, we concluded that the word "knowingly" should be dropped from the existing offence, thus placing the onus firmly on the licensee's shoulders; but that it should be open to the licensee to defend himself or herself by demonstrating to the court that all reasonable steps to prevent commission of the offence had been taken. **We suggest that such a change should coincide with a publicity campaign, similar to the excellent ones the Brewers' Society has already mounted, emphasising the law on under-age drinking, and explaining to customers that licensees were being placed under an extra obligation to verify ages.**

(155). Whilst licensees and their employees have the option of not supplying alcohol where they suspect that it is for the consumption of someone under the age of eighteen, the police have to be more exact if they are to secure convictions for under-age drinking or purchase on licensed premises. The police have no power to demand someone's age, and we believe that this weakens the effectiveness of the law. **We therefore recommend that it should be an offence for a young person who is suspected, with reasonable cause, to be unlawfully in possession of alcohol to fail to disclose his age to a police officer. We also consider that it should be an offence for a young person to give a false age in such circumstances.**

(156). Problems can occur when the police discover an under-age person drinking, but that person and the licensee deny that the drink is alcoholic: in order to establish that the drink is alcoholic, the police then have to send a sample away for costly analysis in already over-stretched forensic laboratories. We believe that it is right that the onus of proof should remain with the prosecution. We have not studied this issue in any detail, but wonder whether it might be possible to provide the police with testing kits (analogous to the Intoximeter used for breath testing) to enable them to detect alcohol on the spot. **We recommend that consideration be given to this suggestion.**

The presence of young people on licensed premises.

(157). In addition to the regulation of young people's drinking, there is the related issue of the presence of young people in licensed premises. Under the present law, young people aged 14 or over may be in a bar; and pubs may set aside family rooms, gardens, and restaurants in which younger children may be present. In registered clubs, people of any age may be present in the bar area.

(158). These provisions have advantages and disadvantages: on the one hand, there is something to be said for young people being introduced to the bar environment under the supervision of adults before they are able to buy and drink alcohol; their presence may also be conducive to a more civilised family atmosphere. On the other hand, the presence of 14-17 year-olds in the bar inevitably causes confusion: the licensee may have considerable difficulty in determining whether the drinks being sold to someone over 18 are illegally destined for an under-18 year-old legally in the bar.

(159). We have considered how the advantages might be retained without the disadvantages. We believe that the increasing tendency of brewers and publicans to provide family rooms and gardens in pubs is to be welcomed and encouraged. It is important, however, that this trend does not lead to a blurring of the distinction between who should and should not be allowed to purchase and consume alcohol.

(160). We are concerned by the tendency of some pub owners to convert pubs into "theme pubs" clearly designed to attract young people. Such pubs, providing

discos and often staffed by young people, are inevitably an attraction for under-age drinkers, and we believe that the absence of older people is likely to reduce the informal social controls which are important to sensible drinking. **We recommend that pub owners, and licensing justices, should consider very carefully whether existing or proposed licensed premises are likely to attract under-age drinking or excessive drinking by young people.**

(161). Our recommendation to prohibit all purchase and consumption of alcohol in public places by those under 18 should help to reduce confusion, especially in pubs with restaurant areas. It is arguable that this, coupled with our recommendation to make licensees more liable for preventing under-age drinking, would make the law so clear-cut that the distinctions between the bar and other areas of licensed premises could be abolished. There would be no minimum age for entry to any part of licensed premises. This would make life very much easier for families with children under 14; and might help introduce children to a civilised pub atmosphere. Licensees would continue to have the right to establish minimum age limits for their premises, or parts of their premises, if they so desired.

(162). In an ideal world, this would no doubt be the right course to take: but we have to recognise that any reduction in the minimum age for entry to a bar might be seen as a signal of the acceptability of under-age drinking. One way of emphasising the prohibition on drinking by the under-18s would be to ban all under-18s from the bar area. Although this would make it easier to remove under-age people from the bar area, it would not stop under-age drinking occurring elsewhere on the premises; and it would prevent 14-17 year-olds drinking soft drinks with older friends and relatives, and from buying soft drinks at the bar. **We have therefore concluded that the present minimum age for entry to a bar should be retained.**

Are licensing justices' powers adequate?

(163). Prosecutions for breaching the licensing laws are dealt with by the criminal and juvenile benches of the magistrates' courts. However, it is arguable that the licensing justices, who have power to grant, renew, or refuse licences, are potentially the most important means of persuading licensees to enforce the law. In theory, they have a wide discretion to refuse licenses, which may include refusal on the grounds of under-age sales, or criminal activity associated with the licensed premises.

(164). There are, however, problems which make it difficult for them to use their powers to reduce crime problems associated with the consumption of alcohol by young people (and indeed older people). First, although a second or subsequent conviction for under-age sales is grounds for forfeiture of a licence, such convictions are, as we have already made clear, difficult to secure. Second, although their discretion is wide, it must be exercised "judicially", and there is some doubt as to what may properly be taken into consideration.

(165). **Magistrates should be able to refuse a licence where particular premises are associated with a crime problem (even if the problem occurs off the premises). Licensing justices should be required to explain the reasons for granting and renewing licences, in accordance with standard criteria; and in particular, where a licence is renewed despite objections or knowledge of an associated crime problem, full reasons should be made public. This should also apply to special hours certificates, and to special orders of exemption granted by the criminal bench. In the case of the**

latter, the bench should include a member of the licensing committee, to ensure that there is proper communication between the criminal and licensing benches. Additionally, licensees should be asked to explain to the court what steps are being taken to deal with any crime problems associated with their premises.

(166). We believe that it is especially important that both licensing justices, and licensees, should be absolutely clear as to the criteria which affect the granting, renewal, or revocation of a licence. **We therefore recommend that a standard code of licensing practice, for the guidance of licensing justices and licensees, should be drawn up by the Lord Chancellor's Department and the Home Office in conjunction with the Magistrates' Association, the Justices' Clerk's Society, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Brewers' Society, the National Licensed Victuallers' Association, the British Retailers' Association, and the Retail Consortium. The exact nature of the guidelines would need to be the subject of considerable discussion, but we suggest that the following proposals might be considered:**

training

- licensees should be required to demonstrate that they and their staff are properly trained in their roles and responsibilities, and the provision of the law: written instructions on these points should be part of the continuing training of licensees and their staff. This should include not only licensees, bar staff, and sales staff, but also more senior personnel with supervisory duties;
- licensers, too, need adequate training. No person should be allowed to act as a licensing justice without having received training. Trainers might include magistrates, justices' clerks, and representatives of retailers' and publicans' organisations.

supervision

- licences should be granted to a person in day-to-day control of the premises, who will be present during the working week (though we can see no objection to other persons (such as area managers) being joined to the licence in addition);
- in off-licensed premises, the method of display is important. Counter service provides the best method of supervision, but we recognise the attractions to retailers and consumers of self-service methods of sale. Where self-service methods are adopted, the licensee should be required to show that the method of sale, display, security, supervision, and training are such as to prevent as far as possible illegal sales and pilferage of alcoholic drinks;

the number, nature, and distribution of existing licensed outlets

- there has been a trend towards the almost unrestricted growth in the number of off-licenses granted. On 30th June 1986, there were 145,300 on- and off-licensed premises, 2% more than a year earlier, and 25% more than in 1976. Over the ten-year period, the growth in off-licenses, at 35%, was especially dramatic. This has inevitably increased the opportunity for young people to obtain alcohol illicitly, especially since many of the new licences have been for relatively unsupervised grocery shops. Applicants should be asked to demonstrate the need for a licence, whether or not the application is opposed, and satisfy the justices that the proposed licensed premises meet that need;

notices and codes of practice

— examples of notices giving the public a clear explanation of the relevant licensing laws, together with a code of practice to ensure that licensees are aware of their responsibilities, should be issued to each licensee at the time of application for a licence; and evidence that these (or similar) notices are displayed, that the licensee has received and accepted the code, should be made a condition of the grant of the licence.

Since the dangers of alcohol abuse exist in registered clubs, we recommend that these, and the existing criteria by which licensing justices grant, renew, and refuse licences, should apply equally to registered clubs, which should be licensed by the licensing justices rather than the criminal bench.

(167). The importance of these criteria should be impressed upon both the licensing justices and the licensees: **we recommend that the initial grant of a licence should always take place in the presence of the licensee, to emphasise the importance of the decisions.**

(168). Licensees trade in a potentially dangerous drug: it is important that they are responsible people. We considered whether licensing justices should be made aware of all an applicant's criminal convictions, including convictions spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, when deciding whether he or she is a suitable person to hold a licence. There is an argument that, after the lapse of time specified by the Act, ex-offenders ought to be allowed to start afresh without the impediment of a criminal record, except in those jobs (e.g. involving the care of children) in which the consequence of reoffence is especially severe. However, on balance, **we concluded that applicants for liquor licences should be exempted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, though we do not consider that the fact that an applicant has convictions, whether current or spent, should automatically act as a bar against holding a licence.**

(169). A further weakness in the powers of the licensing bench lies in the convention that magistrates should act as arbiters in licensing decisions, rather than acting on their own initiative. We understand that benches take different views on this; some follow the convention, which springs from magistrates' judicial role in criminal proceedings; others take the line that, as licensing justices, they have an inquisitorial role which enables them to make their own enquiries. From the point of view of crime prevention, we believe that it would be highly desirable if licensing justices were to take a more positive role in establishing the effects of their licensing decisions upon crime, and take a continuing responsibility (between licence renewals) for the impact of licensed premises upon their communities.

(170). The recommendations in paragraph (166) should go some towards this, but we should also like licensing justices to have the power to make inspection visits to licensed premises, to see for themselves the way in which the premises are designed and conducted, and the consequences of poor management or location upon the premises and environs, especially around closing time. Such power would, in addition to improving magistrates' knowledge about licensed premises in their area, be an indication to licensees of the importance of good management. We understand that some licensing justices already make such visits, but that others believe the practice to be *ultra vires*: **we recommend that the Lord Chancellor's Department should clarify the position and, if it turns out that visits to licensed premises are at present *ultra vires*, take whatever steps are**

necessary to enable them to become a regular duty of licensing justices. This power of inspection should extend to registered clubs and premises with late-night drinking certificates.

(171). This power of inspection should be backed up with additional powers to enable justices to take action where, on the basis of an inspection, they are unhappy with the way in which the premises are being run. We welcome the Government's recent proposal to enable objections to licences to be lodged by the police or members of the public at any licensing session, and **recommend that it should include a provision to enable justices to revoke or suspend licences on the basis of their own inspections.**

(172). Licensing justices undertake a complex job. **We suggest a number of measures which might improve their ability to make the right decisions:**

- (i) **licensing justices should be required to undertake refresher training (say 12 hours every 3 years);**
- (ii) **in small petty sessions divisions, consideration be given to amalgamation of licensing panels to improve consistency and increase experience;**
- (iii) **minimum standards for size, design, security, and method of sale in licensed premises should be provided to licensing justices as guidance;**
- (iv) **licensing justices be required to give reasons for renewal or refusal of licences, and these reasons should be given to objectors, especially where their objections are not sustained.**

(173). At present, the maximum penalty on conviction for selling alcohol to a minor is £100. This penalty seems to us to be rather low, especially since the penalty for buying, or attempting to buy, alcohol under age is £400. While the law rightly places responsibility upon young people by holding them responsible for their actions, we do not believe that a licensee should be held less responsible, as the current discrepancy between the penalties for buying and selling alcohol by or to the under-aged seems to imply. **We recommend that the maximum penalty for selling alcohol to, or allowing alcohol to be consumed by, someone under 18 in a bar should be raised, perhaps to level 3 (currently £400) on the standard scale.**

(174). More fundamentally, we believe that the most effective sanction against breaches of the licensing law is the suspension of licences. At present, this occurs only rarely, and is hampered by the infrequency with which licensing justices consider licences. The criminal bench, which deals with breaches of licences, has no power to suspend a licence. The Government's proposals for licensing reform, which if enacted would enable objections against licences to be heard at any licensing session, should make it easier to revoke a licence after a breach of licensing law has been committed. **We welcome this reform.**



REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

NB The Reference to Guinness at the end of paragraph 99 of the report should be to the GUINNESS TRUST

1. Mr. Addison
2. Prime Minister

2

Ref. A085/1675

MR BUTLER

Quite an
interesting point.
(Though "real terms" here is used
to mean relative to hours worked
not to a fixed price base)

--- Sir Kenneth Stowe has sent me a copy of the note (copy attached) which he has received from the Chief Medical Adviser to the Department of Health and Social Security about the use of alcohol and its effects on health and social behaviour.

2. His main point is that alcohol, particularly in the form of wines and spirits, is now cheaper in real terms than it has been for very many years.

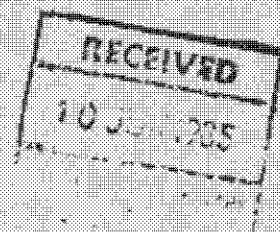
3. Since this is implicitly an argument for much higher taxation of beer, wines and spirits, a copy of Dr Acheson's minute is being sent to the Treasury.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

19 June 1985

Sir Kenneth Stowe



ALCOHOL: BRUSSELS, AND HEALTH

Although my concern in connection with alcohol should be limited to its effects on health, there are one or two points about recent trends of which I am aware which may be relevant to Brussels and to football violence in general. As I have not heard them made in the public debate I take the liberty of setting them out here:-

1. Alcohol is now cheaper than it has been for very many years, particularly in the form of wines and spirits, and is obtainable more freely.

2. In absolute terms it is at present possible to purchase 100 cc of alcohol in a 10 per cent solution in the form of supermarket wine for £2.00 and an equivalent dose in the form of spirits for £2.35 and of beer for £2.75.

?
Bringing Hogarth up to date, it is possible to be drunk for £2.00 and dead drunk for £3.00! The product of an hour's work!

3. Relative to 1965, the amount of work which is needed to earn money to purchase a given quantity of ^{alcohol} ~~work~~ has fallen by 63 per cent for spirits, 56 per cent for wine and 17 per cent for beer.

4. During the period the consumption of alcohol per capita has, except for a check during 1980-2, risen as has the prevalence of alcohol related disease.

10 June 1985

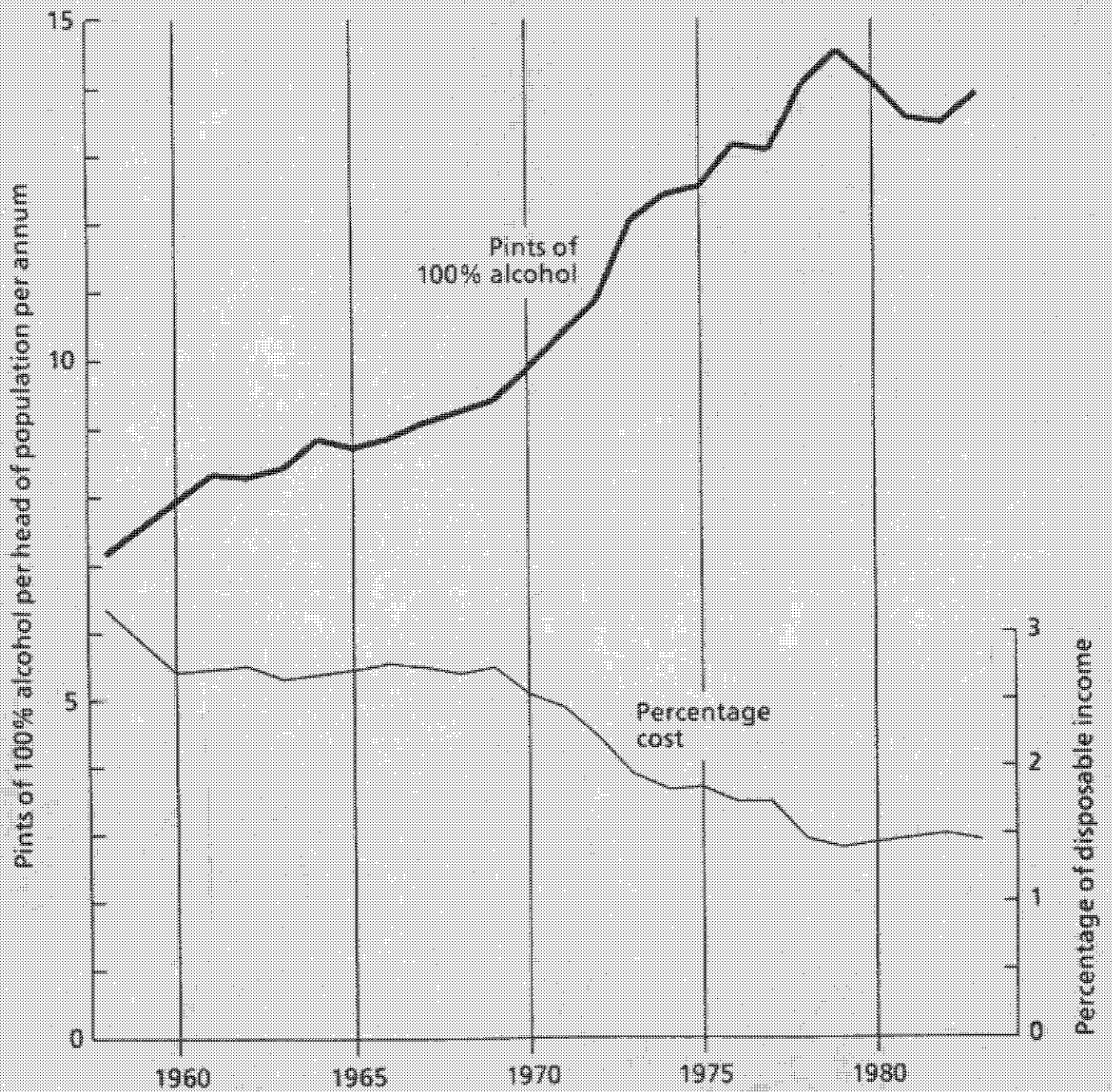
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Samuel Acheson".

CMO

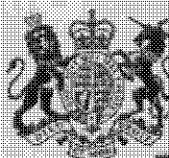
Fig. 3 Cost per pint of 100% alcohol as percentage of personal disposable income at current prices compared to annual consumption per head of population

Sources: HM Customs and Excise; National Association of Cider Makers; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys; Central Statistical Office.

Source: Alcohol Statistics 1984.⁴² Based on the national consumption, and price, of the different types of alcoholic beverage.



Prime Minister 2



You saw the H Papers on this when the Committee agreed to the publication of this document in January. But you will

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY
Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

wish to be aware of the

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Secretary of State for Social Services

concerning the A.

Mike Patison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London SW1

MP

MP

WR
11/12

11 December 1981

Dear Mike

I enclose a copy of the discussion document "Drinking Sensibly" which will be published on Monday, 14 December.

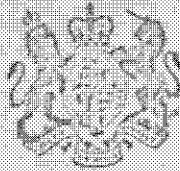
Also enclosed is a copy of my Secretary of State's letter to H Committee colleagues in which he set out the purpose of the document and sought their agreement to a pre-Christmas publication date.

yours

✓

Brendan

BRENDAN O'GORMAN
Private Secretary



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for Social Services

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1

8 November 1981

Don Willie

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON ALCOHOL MISUSE

Enclosed with this letter is a revised version of the draft document on alcohol misuse which was discussed by H Committee on 31 January (H(80)86; H(81) 1st Meeting). This letter explains the changes which have been made and seeks approval for publication of the document.

PURPOSE

Concern about the growth in misuse in recent years has prompted a number of bodies, including the Expenditure Committee in its report in 1977 on Preventive Medicine, to recommend preventive measures. The present draft is intended to serve as the official reply to that report and to recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Alcoholism in its report on Prevention, by the Special Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and by the Expert Committee of the World Health Organisation - the reports of which bodies are referred to in the text.

Since the Expenditure Committee's report there has continued to be speculation based on the assumption that the solution to the problem of alcohol misuse is mainly for the Government. There is mounting pressure for strong measures, eg drastic increases in taxation and a ban on advertising. More constructively, however, interest in taking new initiatives to combat misuse has been shown recently not only by the various voluntary organisations in this field but by representative bodies of the medical profession, statutory bodies such as the Health Education Council and the Scottish Health Education Group, and not least the drinks industry itself. A Government policy statement in the form proposed should help to focus attention on common ground and the need for many interests and disciplines to play a part in preventing further escalation in the misuse of alcohol. It should also discourage pressure for measures that would polarise interests.

E.R.

At the meeting on 13 January, the issue of a document was agreed in principle, subject to revisions to be made in consultation with other Health Ministers, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and the Chief Secretary, Treasury.

The main points made in discussion were that

- i. the document should not canvass views on specific policy options that the Government did not intend to pursue;
- ii. where Government policies were agreed these should be clearly stated;
- iii. reference should be made to the Government's own experience as an employer;
- iv. the role of individuals and people in the different professions should be spelled out more fully.

PRESENT DRAFT

The present draft has been prepared in consultation with the other Government Departments concerned. It takes into account the points made above. Chapter 1 has been modified to convey more accurately the purpose of the document. Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been remodelled to make them shorter and less technical, and to avoid possible criticisms of some of the statistical and research material previously included. Chapters 6 and 7 have been revised substantially by the Home Office and the Treasury respectively, to make clearer current policies on licensing law and other legal controls and on the taxation of alcoholic drinks. Chapter 8 has been re-written to clarify the roles of different groups in helping people with drinking problems. Chapter 9 has been revised to summarise the document and to clarify the strategic framework within which current policies and new initiatives can be seen to serve common ends, taking account of recent proposals for a forum. As now drafted the document is clearly intended to encourage informed discussion about the proper objectives of public policy and sensible standards of private behaviour, rather than to consult on options leading to specific action by Government. Issue of the document would not commit the Government to initiatives requiring additional expenditure or manpower.

TITLE

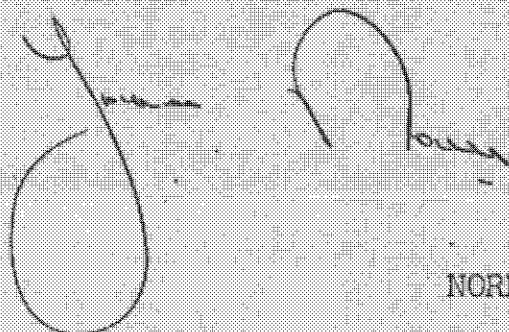
"Prevention and Health: Drinking Sensibly" is suggested as the title. The document would be published as the fourth in the series of booklets issued by the Health Departments on aspects of prevention and health. The booklets issued previously are: "Reducing the Risk: Safe Pregnancy and Childbirth" (HMSO 1977); "Occupational Health Services" (HMSO 1977); and "Eating for Health" (HMSO 1978).

E. R.

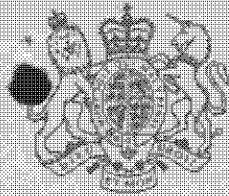
PROPOSED ACTION

I am copying this letter to members of H Committee and to Ministers whose Departments were represented at the meeting on 13 January, and would be grateful for their views at the same time. Copies go also to Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr Ibbs. There would be considerable advantage in publication of the discussion document, (which is not at all contrary to the sensible enjoyment of alcohol in the festive season) before the run up to Christmas; I hope that colleagues will agree that we should work to that target.

It would accordingly be helpful to know by 17 November whether we may have approval for publication without the need for a further discussion in H Committee. If colleagues wish to suggest drafting amendments I hope that these can be left to be cleared at official level.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Norman Fowler'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'N'.

NORMAN FOWLER



✓ MAP

Home Office

NEWS RELEASE

50 Queen Anne's Gate London SW1H 9AT
Telephone 01-213 3030/4050/5050
213-3000 (Nightline)
February 5, 1981

"ALCOHOLISM AND SOCIAL POLICY: ARE WE ON THE RIGHT LINES?"

A Home Office Research Unit Study* published today questions the nature of the relationship between changes in national per capita consumption of alcohol, and the incidence of alcoholism and alcohol-related problems. As the Head of the Research Unit, Mr John Croft explains in the foreword the argument is controversial but is presented as a contribution to debate.

Two versions of this consumption theory of the causation of alcoholism are distinguished, and it is claimed they are often confused. The first (or 'weaker' version) says no more than that the more people who drink, the more are at risk of alcohol-related problems. This, it is pointed out, though obviously true, does not necessarily lead to a policy of attempting to reduce national consumption or of discouraging any growth in the amount drunk by a given population, however that growth might arise. On 'weak' consumption theory alone, there could be no objection to a growth in the numbers of people drinking at moderate rather than occasional levels. Conversely a reduction in the amount drunk by moderate drinkers would not necessarily lead to a reduction in the numbers with alcoholic problems.

The second or 'stronger' version of consumption theory which the report identifies would, it is argued, have implications for policy. It is the theory which says that, given a constant ratio of numbers of heavy drinkers to light and moderate drinkers in a population, then, as more alcohol is consumed, there will inevitably be more heavy drinkers, and more alcohol-related problems. The study reviews the evidence for this theory and argues that it is inadequate. Some evidence from market research sources is quoted which tends in the opposite direction. The market research data suggest that there is no single overall pattern of British drinking, but rather a collection of differing patterns among different sub-groups of the population. Within these sub-groups it is possible for the numbers drinking occasionally or moderately to grow while the numbers of those drinking very heavily decreases.

* "Alcoholism and Social Policy; Are We on the Right Lines?"
Home Office Research Study No 65 by Mary Tuck. HMSO £2.70

The study attributes the serious nature of the problem caused by alcohol and alcoholism, but argues that this is not necessarily most suitably dealt with by an attempt to reduce or control overall national consumption. The study suggests that a better model might be policy on road safety; while the Government recognises a responsibility to do all in its power to minimise road accidents, it does not attempt to do this by minimising any growth in the use of motorised transport, however this might arise. Alcohol policy could, the study suggests, similarly concentrate on ways of encouraging safer drinking patterns, rather than attempt to discourage all drinking. It is suggested that research could usefully focus on discovering those variables which distinguish between 'heavy' and 'problem' drinkers. Not all 'heavy' consumers of alcohol are addicted drinkers or present social problems. Socio-cultural factors and situational factors enter into the causation of alcohol-related problems and could prove amenable to policy initiatives.

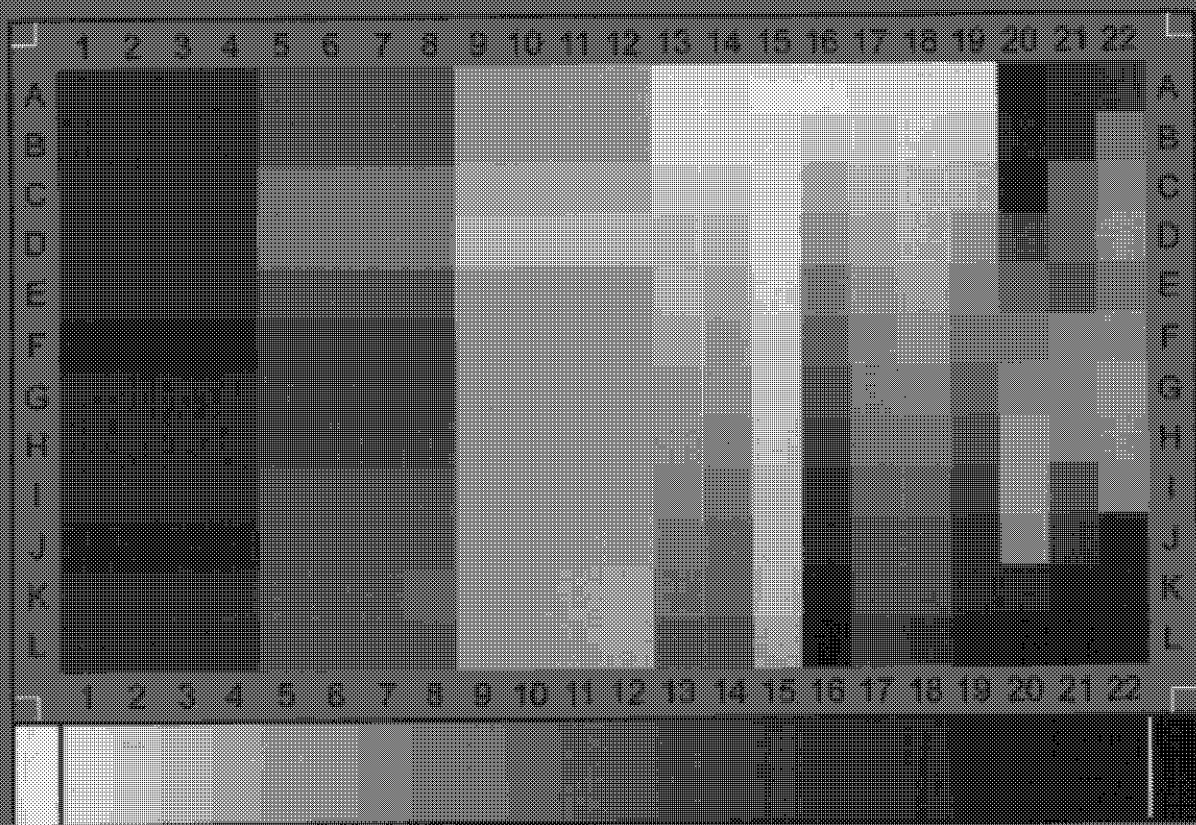
PRIME MINISTER

The recent publicity about possible Government action on alcohol taxation probably arose from some leak of information about the attached paper, on misuse of alcohol, which Patrick Jenkin will bring to H before Christmas.

H(90)86 17/12/80

Paragraph 8 of the covering note explains Mr. Jenkin's handling proposals. Chapter 1 of the paper is offered as a short, balanced presentation of the Government's views on the problem and how to tackle it.

22 December 1980



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