



PRIME MINISTER

This minute contains the "forward look" for the Home Office which you asked for in your letter to me of 16 September.

POLICE

2. After the increases in police manpower since 1979, the prime need now is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the police, under these headings:-

- (a) Operational Effectiveness. With the new Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and the Inspectorate of Constabulary, I am concentrating on securing a more systematic attack on crime, particularly burglary and street crime (though other crime problems, e.g. drugs, cause concern). This more systematic attack on crime will call for a series of positive measures to ensure the right operational policies, effective organisation and planning ability in the police service.
- (b) Training. I shall take a number of steps designed to give training a new direction, style and impetus. Middle management in the police service needs better training in staff work, which is very relevant to (a) above. In the last few years we have raised the status of the Police College and the general level of training there. We shall carry this forward and secure similar improvements in district training centres and training within police forces themselves.
- (c) Community Support. In addition to developing the new consultative arrangements nationally, I consider that specific steps will need to be taken in London to ensure that the Commissioner's accountability to the Home Secretary, and through him to Parliament, is more real and more open, so that the police are exposed to public pressure to get better results.
- (d) Crime Reduction has to be seen as the business of all Government Departments and even more of local agencies. A series of moves needs to be taken to involve local authorities and local agencies in locally co-ordinated moves to reduce crime.

3. We shall need to establish modified arrangements for settling police pay, based on Edmund-Davies principles. Current inter-Departmental discussions will indicate the content and timing of any new arrangements.

4. Some extra money will be needed for training and other new commitments. By the end of the next Parliament the size of the police service could be of the order of 125,000 police officers, giving additional police expenditure of the order of £50 million (at 1983/84 prices).

CRIME

5. We shall need legislation in the next Parliament to set up new arrangements for a Crown Prosecution Service, bringing greater uniformity and professionalism to the prosecution system and increasing the efficiency of the criminal justice system. It is impossible to forecast the resource implications until the nature of the service is known.

6. The efficiency of the criminal justice system needs to be tackled more generally. Delays, the organisation of court hearings, inconvenience to witnesses, inefficiencies in the impact on the police and prison services are all matters which will require attention. The Home Office will need to take specific steps to secure the right response from magistrates' courts.

7. There will be continued opportunity to take measures which will help to improve standards of behaviour and to strengthen parental and individual responsibility. Apart from what might emerge from the Family Policy Group, legislation is needed for the control of video cassettes; action should also be taken on massage parlours and kerb crawling following the expected report of the Criminal Law Revision Committee. I should like to think that the next Parliament will tackle reform of the Obscene Publications Acts, but the first step is to formulate a clear Government position before any commitment is made to legislation.

PRISONS

8. We shall need to make further determined moves to bring about our present objective of securing a better alignment between the essential tasks of the prison service and the provision and deployment of resources in this area. These will include:

- (a) a better control and more effective deployment of prison service manpower;
- (b) a substantial reduction in overtime, which is at present voluntary for the prison officer but essential to the tasks of the system;
- (c) extra manpower (about a further 3,000 prison staff by 1987/88);
- (d) a continued flow of extra resources to sustain the capital programme of new construction and redevelopment of the prisons estate;

- (e) improvements in the management of these and other resources and programmes.

9. One desired result, which (a) - (c) should bring, is the further enhancement of management authority and leadership in the prison service and the better containment of negative POA influences and the enlistment of their positive co-operation.

10. I have deliberately not accorded any individual priority to the elements of this strategy; they are all important and inter-related. The extra public expenditure needed in 1987/88 over 1983/84 will be of the order of £80 - £100 million.

CIVIL DEFENCE

11. We shall need to take measures to resolve the present clash of approach between central Government and local government, but this depends on having a successful and credible Government stance on the nuclear issue overall.

ELECTORAL LAW

12. When the Select Committee on Home Affairs has completed its current study, we shall need to make a forward move towards legislation in the next Parliament on such matters as holiday voting, higher deposits and EEC voting, whatever action is taken about Irish voting. Legislation could be preceded by a White Paper and/or a Speaker's Conference.

IMMIGRATION APPEALS

13. We may need to take action to improve the Immigration Appeals system. We published a review paper two years ago with proposals for modifying rights of appeal in the interests of both justice and efficiency. We will need to consider the response to this before deciding whether legislation is needed, and if so in what form.

THE HOME OFFICE GENERALLY

14. The Home Office has some way still to go in improving its own efficiency. It should develop its Annual Performance Reviews (which were started this year and correspond broadly to the Department of Environment's MINIS) and its work under the financial management initiative (which will sustain the moves by the Inspectorate of Constabulary towards greater police effectiveness).

15. We need to sustain and develop the current programmes for improving efficiency and reducing delays, particularly in the Immigration and Nationality Department, and to make more use of computers where these will help.

OTHER MATTERS

16. There will need to be legislation in the next Parliament on experiments on living animals and on trading hours (Sunday shopping perhaps). Legislation on licensing hours (for which demand is growing) may best be left to a Private Member, but might be suitable for Government.

17. I have not covered in this minute other areas where I propose no change in our present course (e.g. immigration - where we shall maintain a very strict control - race relations and data protection) or where separate policy discussions are now taking place. As regards broadcasting, the development of cable systems will proceed on the lines I recently announced in the House.

18. We shall probably need, following the Malone case under the European Convention on Human Rights, to legislate in the next Parliament on the interception of telephone conversations.

19. We shall need to take great care to steer our special local authority services (police, the probation service etc.,) through any general changes of organisation or finance which come from the Department of the Environment.

20. I have not thought it helpful to sub-divide this response into the three categories mentioned in the second paragraph of your letter. For the most part, the programme in this minute is concerned with the period of the next Parliament, though it is largely a natural development of our present policies and I am already starting to implement it.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Wills

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December 1982.

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