Security

CABINET OFFICE
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~~XXXXXXXXX~~
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Alan
Could I please have a note on our circulation of the relevant CCU papers.
14/1.

13 January 1981

Our Ref: S 03877

Dear Michael

Leak Investigation:

Peter Hennessy's Article, The Times 19 November

I am sorry that my absence from the Office prevented me following up the brief discussion we had right after Christmas about the leak investigation into Peter Hennessy's article. I think we left matters on the basis that I would write to you and that you would consider how best to proceed. I mentioned that I had also spoken to Bernard Ingham, and that he had kindly suggested that the best way to include his side in the investigation would be for me to come around and speak directly to those involved. I hope to contact him later this week about a convenient time.

The background to the investigation, which is now almost completed, is that it appears that Hennessy's article (a copy of which is attached) might be based, at least in part, on information obtained about a meeting of the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) on 30 October 1980. The article contained some inaccuracies - the assertion that there was a "fierce dispute" among Ministers was wrong and, although there was some discussion at the meeting about the use of the TA in a trade dispute, this was not mentioned in the minutes. Because of these inaccuracies the preliminary conclusion is that Hennessy did not see a record of the meeting (CCU(80)9th Meeting) or the memorandum there considered (CCU(80)19 dated 8 October), and that we are most likely to be dealing with an oral leak by someone some way removed from high authority.

Enquiries have centred on those departments who were represented at the CCU meeting, but there are several other departments and offices, of which No 10 is, not surprisingly, one, who received copies of both the memorandum and the minutes and who ought, therefore, to be included within the scope of the inquiry.

I attach a copy of the questionnaire being used by the departments represented on CCU, and I should be grateful if you would consider whether this should also be used within your own area. I leave it entirely to you to decide whether it should be used, and if so how widely it need be circulated. You may consider that it would be more appropriate to make any necessary enquiries by other means, ie direct questioning of those who saw the memorandum and/or the minutes of the meeting.

Whatever the approach you decide to adopt I should be most grateful if you could let me know the outcome of any enquiries you decide to make, as soon as you conveniently can. Enquiries are being limited to officials at this stage.

Mr M A Pattison

If there is any further information you need do please let me know. I am copying this to Bernard Ingham - with apologies to him also for the delay in coming back to him. I have also told Charles Rylands of what is afoot.

Yours sincerely

John Stevens

J W STEVENS

Mr M A Pattison
No 10 Downing Street

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