



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 October 1985

Dear Stephen,

The Prime Minister has now seen the Home Secretary's minute of 30 September with proposals for a seminar on crime prevention. She agrees with the approach suggested by the Home Secretary and that the Home Office should now prepare detailed proposals for the seminar and a guest list with a view to a meeting in January.

I am copying this to Rob Smith (Department of Education and Science), Geoff Dart (Department of Energy), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Williams (Welsh Office), Tony Laurance (Department of Health and Social Security), John Mogg (Department of Trade and Industry), Richard Allan (Department of Transport), Robin Young (Department of the Environment), Jim Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and Leigh Lewis (Department of Employment).

Yours ever

Tim Flesher

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Stephen Boys Smith Esq
Home Office.

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The Home Office plans for a crime prevention seminar are attached. Do you agree

to proceed
as suggested?

PRIME MINISTER

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR

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Yes and



HARTLEY BOOTH



PRIME MINISTER

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR

I was very glad to know of your proposal to chair a seminar on crime prevention. Such an occasion, which will attract widespread publicity, should produce major benefits. Given the strain on resources for the police and prisons we need to emphasise increasingly the scope for crime prevention. The purpose of this minute is to suggest how we can ensure maximum impact from your initiative.

Action against crime cannot be left solely to the police and the criminal justice system. The multi-agency approach, which we have been advocating for some time, lies at the heart of the Government's strategy against crime. We have been pressing forward on a number of fronts. Sir Brian Cubbon had a useful meeting in July with the Permanent Secretaries of other Departments principally concerned to consider how central Government could be more effective in this area. The Home Office Standing Committee on Crime Prevention has been changed by Giles Shaw into an annual conference to which various working groups will report. Its first national conference, which I shall address, will be held on 20 November.

The main objective of the seminar, as I see it, should be to drive home some concise messages to those with responsibility and influence in key areas outside Government. They need to realise what goes wrong if they do nothing. If we can make them aware of their responsibilities, and galvanise them into action, our crime prevention strategy would be advanced significantly. To make the most of the occasion, I believe it essential to set realistic targets and to be clear at the outset what we wish to achieve. For our message to go home, practical concerns and initiatives need to be emphasised. It may therefore be best to concentrate on topics of public concern on which there has already been preparatory work. The seminar could be in part a stocktaking exercise, but would be devoted mainly to agreeing an action plan and timetable for achieving clear targets.

The topics on which to concentrate could be:-

- (a) autocrime (that is theft of, and from, vehicles);
- (b) residential burglary;
- (c) violent crime; and
- (d) crime in the work place.

All four are socially and economically expensive crimes, and are widespread. These are areas in which the private sector has much to contribute and which would attract public support if decisive action were taken. Under each heading, there are a number of objectives which the seminar might seek to achieve.

AUTOCRIME

There is much to be said for establishing a standard for vehicle security which motor manufacturers would meet at the vehicle design stage and for the insurance industry making car insurance premiums or settlements reflect the presence or absence of security measures in insured cars.

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Crime prevention would, I believe, be advanced if the insurance industry were to make insurance premiums or settlements in respect of home contents reflect the presence or absence of domestic security arrangements; the building industry were to adopt BSI recommendations on security in new homes; the home improvement industry were to give greater prominence to available security devices; and if tokens were to replace coins in gas and electricity pre-payment meters (and if such meters were phased out wherever possible).

VIOLENT CRIME

It would be helpful if passenger transport operatives were to implement the recommendations of the ad hoc Department of Transport working group on violence to road passenger transport staff and if the CBI were to implement the recommendations of HSE's Committee on Violence to Staff in the Workplace. The seminar could also usefully look at better arrangements for housing estate design and street lighting, with mugging very much in mind.

CRIME IN THE WORKPLACE

A good deal would be gained if health authorities were to emphasise the importance of reducing crime in hospitals; if there were better protection for staff in Supplementary Benefit Offices; if schools were to pursue initiatives for reducing crime on school premises; and if the retail industry were to take effective steps to reduce shop crime.

You may care to invite about 30 people from outside Government. It is clearly essential to have the leading figures from the insurance, building and motor manufacturing industries. The CBI, the TUC and the police should also be invited. But in addition to those representing the main interests, it would be sensible to bring in others with a good track record for getting things done (for example one or two local authority and health service practitioners) to help produce a lively discussion and promote new ideas.

We could also draw on international experience. For example, Mr Svensson, Director of the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, and Mr Evans, Director of Research and Statistics in the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Canada, are both extremely able in this field, and we may want to bring in the West Germans. In addition, you may wish to invite a Minister from each of the Departments principally concerned, accompanied by a senior official, not least to underline that crime prevention is an integral part of policy right across Government. If you agree with a gathering on these lines, I shall consult other Ministers and let you have some names shortly.

On timing, I suggest that to achieve the best results, the seminar should be held a little time after the meeting of the Standing Conference on Crime Prevention on 20 November so that full account can be taken of that meeting. This points to January. If you agree, I would like to announce the seminar in my speech on 20 November, although it might be as well to mention it to the principal participants shortly before then. As to the

shape and length of the seminar, I suggest a plenary session throughout because common themes run through all the topics suggested. It might need half a day to ensure that the issues are addressed; that those invited can contribute, especially those with something original to say; and that an action plan and timetable can be settled.

✓ If you agree with this general approach, I shall arrange a meeting with Ministerial colleagues and let you have detailed proposals for the seminar and a guest list.

I am copying this minute to Keith Joseph, Peter Walker, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Fowler, Leon Brittan, Nicholas Ridley, Kenneth Baker, Tom King and David Young

Douglas Hurd

30th September 1985