

c: Mr Booth

MR ADDISON

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR

You will wish to coordinate the submission of the attached to the Prime Minister.

My concern is that we are in danger of going over the top. I am all in favour of associating the Prime Minister with an attempt to mobilise the forces in society against crime; but I am much more prejudiced in favour of identifying her with success against crime.

You will recall that precisely the same concerns motivated us in handling the meetings with the football authorities during the Summer: namely, the ever present danger of promising much and achieving little.

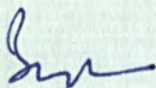
In this case the problem is compounded by the fact that the main thrust of the seminar is against crimes against property - homes, vehicles etc - and not against violence, though that will be mentioned.

The Prime Minister will be seen to be taking the initiative and presenting some of the solutions by the very fact of her holding the seminar. But the most that is likely to come out of this occasion is agreement on the part of the various interests present to go away and take specific action, some of which will inevitably be long term. For this reason I do not believe this is the occasion for a Prime Ministerial press conference or statement; the matter is more properly handled by the Home Secretary.

But what we can do is to prepare a briefing note for the Lobby for issue the day before which clearly sets out the purpose and limits of the event, with an illuminating quote from the Prime Minister.

The Home Secretary (and I for use with the Lobby) will also need a speaking note for his press conference afterwards. This could include a quote from the Prime Minister. Most certainly in my briefing of the Lobby I would seek to give them a fair choice of quotes from the Prime Minister and the discussion. Mr Booth's help in preparing these notes would be appreciated.

I attach a draft reply to Mr Wheeler.



BERNARD INGHAM
23 December 1985

PRIME MINISTER

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR

John Wheeler has written to you (flag A) about publicity arrangements for the seminar. He has, as his letter said, been discussing the seminar with Hartley Booth.

You have already agreed that the Home Secretary would take the press conference alone, after the seminar. Mr Wheeler proposes that you should issue some kind of press statement to accompany the seminar.

A note on this from Bernard is attached. I am sure he is right to say that, even without a statement, the seminar will attract a good deal of publicity, and that there is, in any case, a limit to how much we should be seeking at this stage, in advance of results.

I am sure Bernard's lobby briefing will hit the right note.

If you agree, a draft reply to Mr Wheeler is attached for your signature (flag B).

MLA

MARK ADDISON

23 December 1985

CAJ

PRIME MINISTER

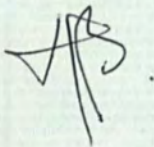
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cc Mr Ingham

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR

Half the policy impact of this event is the effect it will have on public opinion - to demand better locks on their cars etc. While the Home Secretary will handle the Press Conference, do you agree to making a press statement? If so, we will supply a draft. John Wheeler (letter attached) makes a similar point.



HARTLEY BOOTH

From: John Wheeler, J.P., M.P.

A.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

19th December 1985

Mr Prime Minister,

I have been working very closely with Hartley Booth, on crime issues and in particular the Seminar on 8th January.

I want to make a political point arising from my knowledge of the community in London as Chairman of the Conservative London Members' Committee. I am immensely impressed with the way that Douglas Hurd is communicating on crime issues; but there is little doubt that the community 'grass roots' perceives crime to be a major concern.

I consider it therefore essential that you should appear to lead in some form of press statement arising from the Seminar. I believe that crime will be one of the major issues of the London Borough Elections next year, and I think it important that you should be seen to be taking the initiative and presenting some of the solutions. I have every reason to believe that the Labour Party, are picking up the concern from the public and that the Leader of the Labour Party will seek to make the most of crime.

In effect, crime is one of the most important political issues of the day and your leadership in working towards solutions is not only important to the Government but to the Country as a whole.

Yours ever,
JW.

Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.
The Prime Minister.