



CONFIDENTIAL

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PO2042

From: J B UNWIN
2 May 1986

MR NORGROVE

cc PS/Lord President
Mr Stark
Brigadier Budd
Mr Roberts

PRISON OFFICERS' DISPUTE

You may like to have the following brief situation report.

Talks with the POA

2. I understand from the Home Office that this morning's talks went as well as can be expected. They are to be resumed next Wednesday, and no significant industrial action or other trouble is at present expected over the holiday weekend.

3. In brief, the discussion turned largely on the suspension of prison officers who had disobeyed orders, and procedures for the resumption of talks on the Home Secretary's 22 April letter. On the former, the POA agreed to resume normal working on the understanding that, if they did so, the suspensions would be lifted. On the latter, the POA seem anxious to find some way of resuming discussion, provided the Home Office for their part clarify and expand certain proposals in the 22 April letter. There is a certain amount of ritual dancing in this, but the Home Office believe it might provide the POA with the excuse to have another ballot which would get them off the hook of the previous ballot result by which they are currently bound.

4. So far then, so good. There seems a good chance that we shall have a calm period; but we have made stand-by arrangements for contacting and convening officials and Ministers should that prove necessary over the weekend.

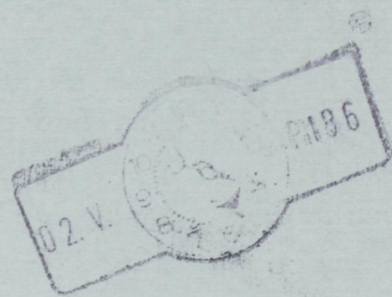
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Temporary Prisons

5. The Ministry of Defence have moved quickly and I understand that Rolleston camp will be ready by next Tuesday night. MOD are also today identifying a second camp, which is likely to be Proteus, near Nottingham. The related emergency Bill to provide powers inter alia to use these camps is also ready and could be introduced the moment it was required (on the usual procedures it would take 3 days to pass, but the Chief whip said last night that in an emergency it could be put through in one day).

J B UNWIN



PRISONS

GOVERNMENT RECORD ON THE PRISON SERVICE

THIS GOVERNMENT HAS:

- IMPLEMENTED THE REPORT OF THE MAY COMMITTEE ON THE PRISON SERVICE WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED BY A LABOUR HOME SECRETARY IN RESPONSE TO SIMILAR INDUSTRIAL ACTION IN THE PRISON SERVICE.
- ENDED THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S NEGLECT OF PRISON BUILDINGS BY INSTITUTING THE LARGEST PRISON BUILDING PROGRAMME IN HISTORY. SPENDING ON PRISON BUILDINGS UP BY 400 PER CENT.
- INCREASED SPENDING ON THE PRISON SERVICE ITSELF BY 85 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.
- INCREASED THE NUMBER OF PRISON OFFICERS BY 3,000 (18 PER CENT) AT A TIME WHEN THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS HAS GONE UP BY 12 PER CENT.
- WIDENED THE RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT AVAILABLE TO COURTS IN APPROPRIATE CASES.

LAW AND ORDER

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

- POLICE AND CIVILIAN MANPOWER UP BY 13,000 SINCE MAY 1979.
- SPENDING ON THE POLICE UP BY ONE-THIRD IN REAL TERMS.
- SPENDING ON POLICE EQUIPMENT UP BY 75 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.
- NEW EMPHASIS ON CRIME PREVENTION INCLUDING 9,000 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEMES.
- MODERNISATION AND EXTENDED POWERS OF POLICE TO DEAL WITH MODERN DAY CRIME.

TF seen

OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH POA: 2 MAY 1986

1. The Prison Officers' Association (POA) agrees that in calling for the suspension of industrial action they were calling on their members to resume normal working. At the national level the Home Office confirms that return to normal working means that the suspensions from duty are lifted.

2. Both sides agreed that the series of talks which the Home Office are now holding with the POA are designed to work towards a position where there can be simultaneous calling off of industrial action and the discussion of an agenda for the future: before that simultaneous action can take place, however, there has to be clarification of the Home Secretary's letter of 22 April. The POA have indicated the areas in which clarification is needed: it is proposed to continue talks to work out further details of clarification.

3. As for the calling off of industrial action, the Home Office are proceeding on the basis that the POA need a further ballot and that for the purposes of that ballot clarification of the Home Secretary's letter is necessary.

4. It has been agreed that there will be further contact with officials with the aim of resuming the meeting on Wednesday morning.

