

cc BHP

INTERVIEW FOR THAMES VALLEY POLICE NEWSPAPER

You have agreed to give a 45-minute interview tomorrow at 11.15 am to "Thames View", the newspaper of Thames Valley Police. This was originally scheduled for 16 December but postponed at the last minute.

The interviewer will be the newspaper's editor, Jackie Douglas. She intends to write a non-political feature about you that will be of particular interest to officers involved in protection duties. It is, of course, the Thames Valley force which provides protection at Chequers.


Most of Mrs Douglas's questions will be personal - about your childhood, family life, friendships, leisure interests and how you cope with the pressures of public life. To sharpen the article she will also ask three questions of specific interest to her readers:

- are there any incidents (amusing or serious) involving Thames Valley police officers at Chequers that stand out in your memory?
- how do you feel about the police officers whose job it is to protect you?
- what are your thoughts on the role of the police service in our changing society?

You do not need briefing on the first two questions, but for the third I enclose excerpts from a lecture by the Home Secretary (at Flag A). A profile of crime and crime prevention in the Thames Valley area (Flag B); and notes on police manpower in Thames Valley and in England and Wales (Flag C) are also enclosed.

Mrs Douglas will not bring a photographer but intends to take her own pictures of you to accompany the article. She would like a formal shot in the study and one or two in a more relaxed setting - perhaps admiring flowers in one of the State Rooms. This could be done in 3/4 minutes at the end of the interview.

I will accompany Mrs Douglas and COI will record the interview.


SIMON DUGDALE
PRESS OFFICE

10 January 1989

LECTURE TO THE POLICE FOUNDATION, 30 JULY 1987, BY THE HOME SECRETARY, THE RT HON DOUGLAS HURD CBE MP

There is always a temptation to take a rosier view of history than the facts justify. In this respect policing is like most other topics. We look back to a golden age which never quite existed. The relationship between the British people and the citizens in uniform who police them has not always been one of unalloyed co-operation and respect. The police have, from time to time, found themselves the focus for the frustrations of malcontents - sometimes not because of police actions but because they happen to be convenient representatives of 'authority'. But having reminded ourselves that policing in the past was not always plain sailing we have to concede that the demands facing the police today are greater and more diverse than ever before.

The police sometimes feel that they are being pulled in conflicting directions. In fighting the most serious categories of crime the level of sophistication expected of them increases by leaps and bounds; but at the same time the public expect a police service which is comfortable, providing reassurance at the street corner, and responding skilfully to local concerns.

The range of skills which the police service must now command is formidable. They must shadow and master the dangerous, labyrinthine and increasingly international world of terrorism. They must combat the corrosive trade of the drug barons. They must unravel highly complex frauds perpetrated by subtle minds in the kaleidoscope of international finance.

For these special challenges Government has to provide additional powers to the police and the courts. Hence the special powers provided by the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the need for Government to ensure that there are no political barriers to the free exchange of information between the police and intelligence agencies in the Western democracies. Hence the

ough confiscation powers which have been given to the courts for use against drug traffickers. Hence, the tightening of company law in recent years and the setting up of the Serious Fraud Office.

But these crimes, although posing a serious threat to society, are not typical of the great mass of crime with which police officers have to wrestle. The reputation and success of the police service depend crucially on the success of the police officer on the beat who is the first line of contact with the public. In an age where deference is scarce officers will often need to earn respect and co-operation - however much your and my instincts cry out that it should already be forthcoming. So at one level the increasing complexity of crime suggests the need for police officers to become specialists. At another they have to relate to the everyday concerns and complaints of their fellow citizens.

So year by year policing requires a yet broader range of aptitudes. The common expectation is professionalism. The Police Service is, I believe, well placed to meet that expectation given the high quality of recruits, the improved conditions of service, the investment in better training and equipment and the commitment of officers at all levels to working in partnership with the community in tackling crime. Community policing is not a fad or a euphemism for soft policing. Community policing goes back to the roots of the Police Service. The police cannot fight crime effectively by rushing about hither and thither in a vacuum of information. 'Community' policing is about gaining the trust of local people and using the support and information thereby gained to increase the security and confidence of the neighbourhood and to maintain the Queen's Peace.

Citizens in Uniform

Super powers and modern equipment are only part of what is needed for effective policing. As Sir Robert Mark has written: 'In the legal and constitutional framework in which society requires the police to enforce the law, the most essential weapon in our armoury is not firearms, water cannon or rubber bullets, but the confidence and support of the people on whose behalf we act'. The tradition of British policing is of a disciplined force of citizens in uniform. An officer may use reasonable force in going about his or her duty of protecting the community. The police remain at all times subject to the law and, on the great majority of occasions, they go about their work unarmed. This is a precious tradition which, subject to the need to give police officers adequate protection, I am committed to maintaining.

It is common but silly to portray the police today as akin to a para-military force. This is nonsense. The police have not caused picket line violence or riots by donning special protective clothing; they have needed that protection because of lawless behaviour by others. Criminals are not more likely to carry firearms because the police have, from time to time, to be issued with them; the police carry arms only rarely and only where the circumstances dictate that they are necessary for their safety and to protect the public. It would be wrong too to imagine that the carrying of firearms by Police Officers has become more prevalent. Between 1983 and 1986 the number of occasions on which firearms were issued fell by almost a quarter. In 1986 firearms were issued on only 2,453 occasions and in only one of these operations did police officers open fire. In the early months of this year there have been two exceptional incidents. But to get a clear impression of how rarely firearms are used by the police one has only to look at the statistics for the years 1983 - 1986 inclusive in which shots were fired by the police on only 17 occasions in total.

Crime Prevention

If we are to reverse the trend in the crime figures which has run for some thirty years it will only be through an effort to prevent crime which goes well beyond the formal criminal justice system. We must involve every citizen and the whole range of public and private agencies which have something to contribute. Housing, education, employment, social services - all these

agencies have something to offer in the response to crime. We must work towards a much closer working relationship between these services and the criminal justice system.

When you stop to think about crime for any length of time it is obvious that its prevention is not a matter exclusively for the police. This is an argument which the police and the Home Office are beginning to win. Crime is the result of millions of individual decisions often on the spur of the moment. We will never be in a situation where there is a police officer standing on each street corner ready to catch the would-be burglar or thief. Crime is held in check by the sanction of law but equally people are prevented from lapsing into crime through a complex network of values, standards and community ties which are engendered and either weakened or reinforced as we go through life.

The real hope of reversing the tide of crime lies in prevention. This can be done at many different levels. It involves schemes like Neighbourhood Watch through which groups of citizens work together with the police. It involves initiatives like the measures taken under the Community Programme or Estate Action to increase physical security measures for pensioners or for hard pressed council tenants. But it should also involve digging deeper and seeking to pre-empt lapses into crime through: education, diverting young people into constructive leisure activities, giving proper support to unstable families, improving housing management and design and through recreating a sense of optimism in those places where opportunities are scarce and crime seems endemic.

Few of these areas of action come within the traditional purview of the police but they are all highly relevant to the long term reduction of crime. Too often other agencies - public, private and voluntary - forget the crime prevention dimension to their work. We cannot afford such a blinkered approach. We need to bring the police and other constructive groups and agencies together more frequently to work together and plan together. Increasing the security of the citizen and of our communities is

emphatically not just a matter for the police - indeed, it often seems that the police are called upon to pick up the pieces when other agencies have failed.

Crime naturally generates strong feelings of anger and anxiety in our country - as it does throughout the Western world. Understandably the public look to the police , the courts and the probation and prison services for protection. We must ensure the best possible service from the formal criminal justice system. We have shown our commitment to strengthening each of them; where gaps appear in the law we shall fill them as a matter of priority. But however professional the Police Service we must have a realistic expectation of what officers can achieve alone. We all have a role to play in working as good citizens with the police in lightening the load which they must carry so that they may concentrate on bringing to justice those whose actions pose the greatest threat to the safety of the citizen and on providing reassurance which can lift the pernicious pall of fear of crime which sits on too many neighbourhoods.

THAMES VALLEY: 15 DECEMBER 1988

Recorded crime figures 1987 (Table A and B)

The recorded crime rate in the Thames Valley area is somewhat lower than the England and Wales average (6,131 offences per 100,000 population compared with 7,773 nationally). All of the main offence groups also have lower rates. Violence, burglary and criminal damage are about two thirds the national average, while theft is about four-fifths of the national rate.

Changes in recorded crime 1980-87 (Tables C and D)

Since 1980 recorded crime in Thames Valley has increased by a greater proportion than in England and Wales (58 per cent compared with 45 per cent). Sexual offences and fraud have increased at about double the national rate, and offences of violence against the person and criminal damage have also risen appreciably more than the national average.

Latest recorded crime figures (Tables E and F)

In the period January to September 1988 recorded crime in Thames Valley decreased by 8 per cent compared with the corresponding period in 1987. This compares with a 4 per cent decrease nationally between the same periods. The decrease in Thames Valley was largely accounted for by the decreases in theft and burglary, for which the proportionate decreases were greater than the national decreases.

Clear-up figures 1987 (Tables A and B)

The clear up rate in Thames Valley area in 1987 was lower than the national average (31 per cent compared with 33 per cent). The clear up rate in Thames Valley fell from 36 per cent in 1986, in contrast to the national average which increased slightly from 32 per cent

THAMES VALLEY: CRIME PREVENTION

Force Crime Prevention Team

60 officers from the Community Liaison Department include crime prevention in their daily duties.

Crime Prevention Panels

There are 11 panels throughout the Thames Valley area. Each includes representatives of a wide cross-section of the local community. All are active and currently involved in seeking sponsorship for crime prevention publicity material.

A successful Youth Crime Prevention Panel operates in Milton Keynes.

Neighbourhood Watch

1539 schemes operate at present with more in the pipeline. This compares with 674 schemes a year ago.

Autocrime

Autocrime remains a problem. Regular poster campaigns, using Home Office publicity material, are run throughout the force area, concentrating on problem areas such as town car parks and beauty spots.

Architect Liaison Officers (ALOs)

There are 3 posts in the force area, offering guidance and advice on designing out crime. It is reported that there is a good relationship with private and public sector developers.

Schools

The police aim to teach crime prevention to each class in every school at least once a year. The development of the Police/Schools liaison programme since 1983 contributed to an 18% reduction in the number of individual referrals for criminal offences to the Juvenile Bureau from 6571 (in 1985) to 5396 (in 1987).

Publicity

There is a good relationship with local press and radio who regularly support crime prevention activity.

POLICE AND CIVILIAN MANPOWER : THAMES VALLEY

Improvements in resources since 1979

1. Strength	May 1979	31 October 1988	Increase/decrease
POLICE	2,653	3,582	+929
CIVILIAN	970	1,204	+234
TOTAL	3,623	4,786	+1,163
2. Establishment	2,997	3,576	+579

Applications for increases in establishment

In 1988/89 the Police Authority applied for 200 additional police posts. The Home Secretary was able to approve 90 as part of his four year programme announced in May 1986 to increase provincial force establishments by some 2,000.

For 1989/90 the Police Authority have made an application for an increase of 209 police posts (this is part of their phased plan to increase the force by 700 officers). This will be considered by the Home Secretary, with advice from HM Inspector of Constabulary, and the Police Authority should know the outcome of our consideration by the end of January 1989 when the Home Secretary announces the allocation of the 1,100 posts available for 1989/90.

Civilianisation

Thames Valley have one of the best records for civilianisation (they are in the top six). Accountable civilian staff represent 28.4% of the authorised establishment. This is above the average of 23% for all forces (excluding the Metropolitan Police). The force continues to look at areas where civilians can replace police

officers. The force has plans to civilianise scenes of crime officers (which would release 29 police officers) and is considering civilianisation of station enquiry desks (there were 125 officers at 31 December 1987 tied up with this duty).

Police Manpower

General

(i) Government support for the Police

Line to take

(a) Strength of police at 30 September was 124,737 a gain of over 13,200 since May 1979;

(b) 5,853 additional police posts approved since May 1979;

(c) some 3,300 police posts released to operational duties in the last five years or so (ending December 1987) through civilianisation with government meeting the bulk of the cost;

(d) expenditure for 88/89 provided at £3.7 billion representing a real terms increase of 52% over 78/79;

(e) more police posts to be approved for 89/90 than in previous year - 1,100 rather than 800; programme of substantial increases (numbers not yet determined) to follow in the years after 89/90.

(ii) Announcement of increases in police establishments for 89/90

Line to take

The Home Secretary is considering applications for increases which have been received from many authorities for increases in 1989/90. He looks to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for advice. He hopes to take decisions in the coming weeks.