

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. [unclear] 11/3
to see.
[unclear]
11/3

W. had called
leave this meeting
to talk [unclear].
Home Affairs

PRIME MINISTER

LAW AND ORDER

You told me this morning that you wanted me to set up for you a meeting with the Home Secretary and the other Ministers directly concerned to discuss the problem of law and order in its broadest context.

May I remind you of the attached minute from the Home Secretary to the Secretary of State for Education and Science seeking colleagues' views on this problem and inviting them to a meeting. If we are to set up a meeting here, this will, of course, pre-empt what the Home Secretary has already set in train and I think that before we make any move in this direction, it will be politic for you to have a word with him. Would you like to raise the matter with him at the end of your meeting at 0930 tomorrow, Thursday, on the legislative programme?

Jah.

10 March 1982

CONFIDENTIAL



Home Affairs
Prime Minister 2
This follows up the points you have
made to Sir Brian Cullum and the
Home Secretary.

W/2
2/3

Secretary of State for Education and Science

CRIME

The upward trend in recorded crime, and particularly violent crime, is causing concern. One of the disturbing features is the involvement of children and young people. A high proportion of those arrested during last summer's riots were aged between 10 and 20; mugging is increasingly common in London; and in the last few days events at St Saviour's School, Toxteth, have provided a frightening example of violence and intimidation by young children.

2. The police are in the front line here. Thanks to our success in improving pay and morale, the police are now at record strength; numbers are still increasing in London; and more men are being put back on the beat. With my active encouragement Chief Officers are concentrating on improving police effectiveness and on crime prevention, which is the key to the problem since if crime can be prevented, we avoid the suffering of the victims and reduce the burden on our hard-pressed courts and prisons.

3. The Inspectorate of Constabulary will oversee these operational developments. The Home Office also has further projects concerned with police deployment, technological development and crime prevention. I shall change the rules for disqualification for jury service as soon as I can get a legislative opening. I am encouraging, by additional resources, the part which the probation service can play.

4. But the problem of crime goes well beyond the direct concerns of the Home Office. It concerns the community as a whole, and ultimately what we need are fundamental social and moral changes, which are for the longer term.

5. There is however a large potential area of helpful action in the local services apart from the police. There is room for local initiatives to reduce the opportunities for crime, to divert potential offenders and to encourage a sensible climate of opinion and local leadership on these matters.

6. I have just been discussing the matter with a group of senior Chief Constables. There was general agreement that they could be helped more by a number of local agencies and services.

7. For example, although police liaison with some schools is extremely good, I am told that there are others where the police are not welcome and their advice is ignored. If the police had

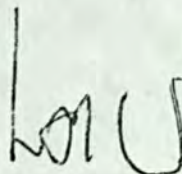
been warned at a much earlier stage of the impending trouble at St Saviour's, Toxteth, they might have been able to help. I was told of other cases in which troublemakers have been sent home from school regardless of the fact that they cannot go home because mother is at work and, therefore, they become a potential problem for the police on the streets. I wonder whether Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools could make a particular point of encouraging more liaison between schools and the local police. And is there anything more that the Youth and Social Services, or indeed any other Agency, can do to help children at risk?

8. This problem is not confined to children of school age. Much depends on the co-operation generally of local authorities and others, in all fields. I doubt if the police are consulted as often as they should be on the location and design of council housing to reduce the risks of vandalism; or on better street lighting to reduce the risk of mugging. I recognise the efforts which have been made to promote 'dual use' of facilities in schools and colleges, but are recreational facilities geared to diverting people from crime?

9. I know that much has been achieved in the last few years through the consultative arrangements which followed the joint circular on juvenile delinquency issued by our Departments, the DHSS and the Welsh Office on 19 December 1978. I know that our Departments are already in regular touch on juveniles, under the lead of the Department of Health and Social Services. But what I am looking for is specific action, from the point of view of crime prevention.

10. I should like to ask you and the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Health and Social Services to consider these thoughts on a broad basis, in the context of the work of your Departments and of the local services with which you are concerned. Could you let me know how you and they could help to facilitate the work of the police; to prevent crime by taking action themselves; and, more generally, to improve the local climate and local leadership on these matters. When I have your replies, I should like to invite you to a meeting to discuss the matter further.

11. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Secretaries of State for the Environment, Health and Social Services, Employment, Scotland and Wales and to Sir Robert Armstrong.



1 March 1982

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