

PRIME MINISTER

FA/FOOTBALL LEAGUE PRESS CONFERENCE

I mentioned this morning that we need a firm, resolute and public Government presentation after Monday's meeting with the football authorities.

It is clear from Mr Macfarlane's approach to me afterwards that he intends taking the lead, and wants me to ring him on Sunday evening to discuss the arrangements.

I need guidance.

This is because:

- i. expectations have been aroused, and a Parliamentary Under Secretary is (in my view) too low a level to convey the Government's concern and determination; and
- ii. I am reliably informed that Mr Macfarlane does not have a great deal of credibility with the media; his relations with them are not good, for a variety of reasons.

We need to decide who should take the lead. Bearing in mind the Kilroy-Silk affair, we also need to make sure of the availability of Ministers for media work.

The neatest compromise is for Patrick Jenkin to hold a press conference after the meeting, accompanied by Mr Macfarlane. The alternative is for the Home Secretary and Patrick Jenkin, accompanied by Mr Macfarlane and Mr Renton, to meet the press perhaps under my chairmanship.

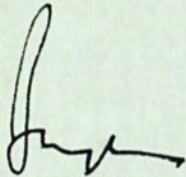
I would prefer a double-handed Brittan/Jenkin press conference, chaired by me.

'This would

This would underline the Government's concern and determination to crack the problem. Mr Macfarlane and Mr Renton should be present and on the platform.

I need a decision overnight so that arrangements can be set in hand for a press conference at the Home Office/Department of the Environment.

Agree Home Secretary/Patrick Jenkin press conference?



BERNARD INGHAM

28 March 1985