

PRIME MINISTER

SOCCER HOOLIGANS

The Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for the Environment, supported by the Mr. Macfarlane and Mr. Renton, plan to give a press conference at the Department of the Environment tomorrow immediately after the meeting with the football authorities.

Regardless of whether there is to be a statement to the House, I believe it is important that the Government should get its point of view over on the lunchtime bulletins. It is highly desirable therefore, that the press conference should start no later than 1230 and preferably earlier.

I see no point in a joint press conference with the football authorities.

Could I finally remind you of the public relations issues I mentioned on the plane yesterday:

- it is very important that in canvassing the designation of third and fourth division grounds we show ourselves to be aware of the clubs' financial position; to emphasise that designation does not automatically require all grounds to erect secure fences; and to note that money for this work is in any case available from the Football Trust. We do not aim to close poor clubs down.
- in broaching the idea of membership/identity cards, we understand fully the need to cater for the casual spectator. Our aim is not to drive people away from matches but to make grounds safe for families and therefore to encourage the ordinary decent spectator to go to matches and enjoy his football.
- our aim indeed is to help the sport, players, genuine supporters, residents near football grounds, the ordinary traveller and the police by making them all safe from the disgraceful thugs who now infest too much of football.

BERNARD INGHAM

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