



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 April 1985

cc: Jack Dunnett

DOE

HMT

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D/Trans.

DSG
Min/Sport

Press, FCO

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Press Office

Dear Mr Millichip,

I was most grateful for the constructive and helpful discussion we had on Monday. It is clear that we share a firm commitment to implementing vigorous new measures to combat the continuing problem of violence at football matches. You must be in no doubt of the Government's resolve to support you and the Football League in taking every action you can to prevent and control incidents, so that football can become once again a family entertainment and sport.

In our discussion you, and the Football League, agreed to:

- re-examine urgently the FA rules governing discipline and the responsibilities of clubs, with a view to changing and strengthening them. You will look in particular at the possibility of removing the reference to "all reasonable precautions";
- accelerate the introduction of CCTV especially at grounds where problem matches may be played;
- ensure that perimeter fencing is in place and effective in those grounds;
- investigate a practical scheme of membership cards for Football League, FA and European/International matches, in discussion with UEFA as necessary. You agreed to report back to Neil Macfarlane within six weeks;

ELB AFU

DSG

- introduce more restrictions on the issue of tickets for problem matches (which should be ticket only);
- encourage more and better family enclosures at League grounds;
- deal severely with any bad example set to supporters by players' behaviour on the pitch.
- in advance of the legislation we propose, take action under your existing powers to deal with the problem of alcohol at matches.

I hope that significant progress can be made before the start of the season.

The Government will support you. We are prepared to take action in the following ways:

- legislation will be introduced to control the sale of alcohol at grounds, and on transport to grounds, along lines that have been successful in Scotland. The powers would be used selectively;
- Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act, designation will be extended to clubs in Divisions 3 and 4 of the Football League, initially to grounds with a record of violence and the guidelines in the Green Code will be reviewed;
- The White Paper is to be published shortly on our conclusions following our Public Order Review and our proposals for legislation in the autumn. Some of the new provisions will assist in preventing and controlling football hooliganism;
- The Home Secretary will be discussing with the police what improvements can be made to the effectiveness in

dealing with football violence, particularly in obtaining evidence to bring more serious charges, where appropriate;

- The Home Secretary is encouraging magistrates to make full use of their powers, including detention and attendance centre sentences and bail conditions forbidding attendance at matches; and is drawing attention to the Court of Appeal guidelines on sentencing violent offenders;

- For matches abroad, we will consult other Governments about publicising better and perhaps strengthening last year's Council of Europe recommendation on football violence. We will consider what further help we can give in passing on details of troublemakers abroad. We will study whether arrangements can be made for people convicted of offences overseas to serve their sentences in this country. We will seek to discourage travel agents from setting up special schemes in the case of problem matches.

I believe this represents a substantial package of new measures from the Government to support the strong action you and the Football League have agreed to take. I welcome your initiatives and the constructive, firm approach you have adopted. I feel confident that progress will be made in dealing effectively with the problem.

I am copying this letter to Mr. Jack Dunnett.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

F. A. Millichip, Esq.



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Prime Minister.

This is the letter to the
Football Association, setting out
action for them and action
for us, following Monday's
meeting.

Make Address

3/4

It has been agreed with
DOE, Home Office and FCO