

PRIME MINISTER

c. Mr. Ingham

FOOTBALL: MEMBERSHIP CARDS

I am worried about the way in which I hear that Mr. Macfarlane's discussions with the football authorities have been going.

Mr. Macfarlane tells me that he reached an impasse in his discussions with Mr. Dunnett. Mr. Dunnett has seen the Sperry system and is not impressed. Mr. Croker is also apparently strongly against membership cards and, while Mr. Millichip would be prepared to give them a try, he has said that he would support Mr. Croker.

The Football League Management Committee are having a meeting next Friday and may well decide to call a meeting of all the clubs. The likelihood must be that this will only extend and solidify opposition to membership cards. Mr. Macfarlane is not due to meet the football authorities again until after he reports from his next meeting with European Sports Ministers in Strasbourg in the week after next. So there is a danger that we are on course for the football authorities rejecting membership cards and the Government's either suffering a rebuff or having to consider enforcing membership cards in the face of a lack of cooperation from the clubs. My impression from talking to Mr. Macfarlane is that he is being a bit passive about this and that, before the Football League Management Committee meet on Friday, he ought to have another go at persuading the Football League of the dangers of splitting with the Government on this issue. It should be possible to persuade them to issue central guidance on a membership card scheme of some sort, evn if they do not try to make it mandatory on their members. But, at the moment, I see the clubs drifting into united opposition.

21 June 1985

PS. Mr. Macfarlane also tells me that he has got a most interesting video of football hooliganism at the Huddersfield v. Leeds match which he would like to show you. It takes about 20 minutes. If you agree we will look for a suitable opportunity for you to see it.

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Has we discuss on Monday morning

See Mr. Livan's letter - hutton. He will introduce cards

FERB.

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