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JD

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

26 June, 1985.

Dear Phil,

**CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH FOOTBALL AUTHORITIES**

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Minister's progress report on the meetings of his two working groups.

On football ground safety, the Prime Minister has noted the position so far reached. She assumes that steps are being taken to bring home to local authorities the nature of the decisions which will be required of them before next season's matches.

The Prime Minister found disturbing your Minister's report that the football authorities might try to make the issue of membership cards a sticking point. It is already clear that a number of clubs will introduce their own schemes of membership cards, and there is some support for such schemes from the Professional Footballers Association. If the football authorities were to take a negative position on this issue it would be bound to bring them into conflict with the Government, and that could not be in the best interests of football or of ground safety. The Prime Minister hopes that your Minister will do his utmost to ensure that the Football League Management Committee recognise the need to give a positive lead, and certainly to avoid taking up an entrenched position in opposition to membership cards.

I am copying this letter to Hugh Taylor (Home Office), John Ballard (Department of the Environment), Steve Pike (Mr. Shaw's Office, Home Office), Richard Bennett (Mr. Mitchell's Office, Department of Transport), Mr. Ritchie (Mr. Stewart's Office, Scottish Office), Mr. O'Sullivan (Mr. Stradling Thomas's Office, Welsh Office), and Mr. Whysall (Mr. Scott's Office, Northern Ireland Office).

Your ever,

Robin Butler

(F.E.R. Butler)

Phil Dykins, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.

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