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THE PROSECUTING SOLICITORS' SOCIETY
OF ENGLAND AND WALES

18/09/85
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Your Ref:
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Park House,
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Tel. 394011

24th September 1985

Dear Prime Minister,

As you know the Crown Prosecution Service is due to start in certain parts of the country on the 1st April 1986. At the moment, outside London, there are approximately 800 Prosecuting Solicitors and they will form the main part of the new service. Unfortunately the recommendations for salaries and career structures which have emerged from the Treasury are so unsatisfactory that the morale of the members of our Society could not be lower. Lawyers have already started to go elsewhere, and I have no doubt that there will be the greatest difficulty in recruiting and retaining the staff of the necessary calibre.

At the Annual General Meeting of our Society on the 15th September 1985, the attached Resolution was passed unanimously.

I have been in touch with Sir Michael Havers about this matter, but I have also been instructed by the members of our Society to convey to you their profound disquiet. From different parts of the country I have received expressions of anger, frustration and disillusionment.

It is extremely sad that this mis-calculation by the Treasury is now going to jeopardise the success of the service which was meant to act as a balance to the powers given to the police under the Police Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

I am very conscious of the fact that you are very heavily committed to deal with matters of national and international importance, but we are all concerned that the highest possible standards must be observed in the administration of law, and

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therefore, we would be most grateful if you would spare some time to allow representatives of the Society to see you, and to emphasise the present state of the low morale.

Yours sincerely,

John Timmons
PRESIDENT

Prime Minister,
House of Commons,
LONDON.

RESOLUTION

In order to provide a safeguard against the misuse of the enhanced Police powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, H.M. Government committed itself to establishing a Crown Prosecution Service which would be so financed as to ensure the recruitment of professional staff of a calibre commensurate with the high standards to be expected of the Service, and to provide an attractive career structure.

The Society noted the statement of the Solicitor General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, in the House of Commons on 16th April, 1985: "It is important that Chief Crown Prosecutors and all prosecuting members of the new Service should be remunerated on a basis that ensures that they provide the high standards that will be required." In the light of such assurances the Society expresses deep concern regarding current intimations as to the conditions of service which will govern transferees and recruits into the new Service, and in particular, to the gross disparities which will emerge in comparison with existing legal professional staff in other Civil Service Departments.

Comparisons of both career prospects and scales of remuneration lead inevitably to the conclusion that H.M. Government is in the process of creating a second class Service unsuited to exercise substantial statutory powers affecting the liberty of the individual.

Unless there is an attractive career structure at least commensurate with the terms and conditions enjoyed by lawyers presently employed in the Civil Service, the Society considers that the new Service cannot hope to recruit and retain lawyers of appropriate calibre and experience.

Having co-operated with great enthusiasm throughout the formative stages of the new Service, this Society must now give voice to the profound disquiet and disillusion felt by its national membership.

The Society considers that the present proposals are irreconcilable with the Prime Minister's reported statement on 10th August, 1985: "We have never scrimped in any way on resources for law and order."