

PRIME MINISTERThe Buckingham Palace Incident

I attach Assistant Commissioner Dellow's first and second interim reports. You are seeing the Home Secretary at 1700 on Monday to discuss the Statement on the incident which he is due to make in the House on Wednesday.

The Home Office tell me privately that they regard Dellow's reports as thin, and I am afraid that they are right. But they have themselves been working with the Commissioner and with the Palace all week on proposals for improving both personal protection and physical security at the Palace and at other Royal residences, and they have virtually agreed between them a package of measures which, I am told, is a good deal meatier than anything contained in the Dellow reports. Mr. Whitelaw, who is seeing the Commissioner on Monday morning, should be able to elaborate on his proposals when he sees you on Monday afternoon.

JWH.

16 July 1982



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HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

16 July 1982

See above

The Home Secretary has today received from the Commissioner a second interim report by Assistant Commissioner Dellow. He has asked me to send you the enclosed copy for the Prime Minister. Mr Dellow gave the Commissioner an initial interim report on Monday, 12 July, which the Commissioner and Mr Dellow used as a basis for their oral report to the Home Secretary that morning. We have now also been provided with copies of the first interim report and a copy of that is also enclosed. The reports need to be read together.



Love sincerely
Colin Walters

temporarily retained

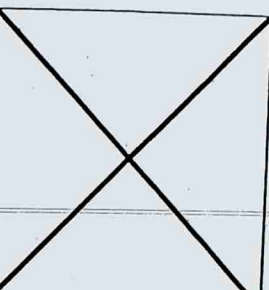

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C J WALTERS

C A Whitmore, Esq.

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Buckingham Palace (Security)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. William Whitelaw): With permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement.

When I reported to the House on 12 July, I said I would make—as soon as I could—a further statement about the major breach of security at Buckingham Palace on 9 July. I have now received and considered a further report from assistant commissioner Dellow. I thought it right to place in the Library, and make available to right hon. and hon. Members in advance of this statement, a detailed account of the incident, the background to it, the failures that occurred and the subsequent action.

On 19 July I informed the House of the resignation of commander Trestrail, the Queen's police officer, following his confession to having had over a number of years a homosexual relationship with a male prostitute. The confession raises further grave questions concerning the arrangements for the Queen's security. Accordingly, I have invited Lord Bridge to investigate the appointment as Queen's police officer and the activities of commander Trestrail with a view to determining whether security was breached or put at risk; to advise whether in the light of that investigation any change in security arrangements is necessary or desirable; and to report. Lord Bridge is chairman of the security commission, but would conduct this inquiry sitting alone. I am glad to say that he has agreed to undertake the task. I shall, of course, inform the House of his findings. Although I have no evidence of a connection between this matter and the incident on 9 July, I am arranging for Lord Bridge to see all the papers relating to the events on 9 July so that he can make any further inquiries he considers necessary and advise on the adequacy of the police inquiries.

I turn now to the events of 9 July. Mr. Dellow's inquiry has revealed that although there were technical failures, the basic cause of the breakdown of security was a failure by the police to respond efficiently and urgently. Furthermore, the incident revealed slackness and weaknesses in supervision. The commander, A district, has resigned from the force and the chief inspector at the palace has been transferred to other duties. Those were the two officers charged with the supervision of the uniformed officers at the palace.

Mr. Dellow has also outlined the serious errors and omissions which exposed the Queen to danger. As a result, four other police officers are subject to disciplinary inquiries. One of those officers has been suspended and two have been removed from their former duties. I am sure that the House will accept that the officers concerned have a right to a fair hearing. I must remind the House that I have an appellate responsibility in police discipline cases and it is not proper for me to comment further on those individual cases.

I have considered with the Commissioner what further arrangements are needed to ensure efficiency, greater professionalism and effective supervision. I have accepted his proposal that the protection of Her Majesty the Queen, other members of the royal family, and their residences will be the single responsibility of a deputy assistant commissioner reporting directly to the Commissioner. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Colin Smith has been appointed to this new post. He will head a new Department responsible for all aspects of royalty protection. The senior

officers in the new royalty protection department, including DAC Smith, will work from Buckingham Palace. This will ensure the closest supervision at senior level and also effect the most direct links with the household and staff of the Queen and the senior officers of the household division, who have promised their full co-operation.

Operational responsibility for all protection will thus be brought together. DAC Smith's first task will include a remit to make recommendations for revised arrangements for posting and training and to keep them under review. He will pay particular attention to establishing and maintaining a regime of duty which is adequately varied and testing.

Since the incident, the number of uniformed police officers on protection duties has been increased. Some new technical security devices have been installed; some existing devices relocated; and all thoroughly tested.

Assistant Commissioner Dellow's inquiry will continue in respect of assessments of further physical security measures. In this task, I have asked Mr. Dellow to draw on all sources of available expertise, in the public and private sectors. The results of this work will enable the completion of Mr. Dellow's inquiry. The work of keeping these matters under review will then be carried forward by DAC Smith. But all physical measures depend ultimately on the people who operate them being of high quality and properly supervised. The new leadership and arrangements I have outlined are designed to ensure this.

I have asked the chief officers of other forces in England and Wales, who have responsibilities for royal residences, to review the arrangements they have made, and make any further recommendations beyond those measures which have already been implemented. The chief officers concerned will work closely with DAC Smith. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland has done the same within his area of responsibility.

I have decided to institute a new permanent group, comprising representatives of the royal households, the police, the Household Division and the Property Services Agency, chaired by one of my senior officials. This group will meet regularly to examine the effectiveness of the arrangements made. It will not in any way lessen the operational responsibility of DAC Smith and the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. The group will report personally to me.

I believe that the bringing together under a DAC of the responsibility for all protection for the Queen and members of her family, the changes in staffing, the improvements in equipment, and the monitoring of the new arrangements I have announced, constitute the best approach to improving palace security. I have also announced the terms of Lord Bridge's inquiry. Although I have no evidence that the incident of 9 July and the resignation of Commander Trestrail were connected, I have arranged for Lord Bridge to see the papers relating to the former event.

The shocking events of 9 July were handled by Her Majesty the Queen with great composure and resolution. But it is intolerable that Her Majesty should have been exposed to this intrusion and put at risk in this way. It is not the wish of Her Majesty, her Ministers or, I am sure, of this House, that she and other members of the royal family should be confined by measures of high security that deny private life and public accessibility, but the

passing the phoney debating point about underspend or capital receipts across the Floor of the House will the Minister agree, as he is concerned about capital spending, to increase the housing investment programme allocation of any local authority that tells him that it wants to spend more so that we can get rid of the 30 per cent unemployment in the building industry, which the Minister has created?

Mr. Stanley: There is nothing phoney about hundreds of millions of pounds of genuine cash receipts coming to local authorities, which this Government alone made it possible for them to spend. One gets the impression from the right hon. Gentleman that anything is phoney if it does not reinforce his prejudices. The right hon. Gentleman talked about damage to the construction industry. I see that the Labour Party is now committed to the establishment of a national construction corporation based on the acquisition of one or more contractors, the extension of the activities of local authority direct labour organisations and the establishment of a building materials corporation. In terms of damage to the construction industry, that programme of nationalisation and municipalisation would be the single greatest disaster for it.

Council Houses and Flats

21. **Mr. Dubs** asked the Secretary of State for the Environment how many council houses and flats are standing empty; and what proportion of this total is (a) awaiting repair and (b) awaiting purchasers.

Mr. Stanley: According to the authorities' own estimates, 97,000 council dwellings were vacant in England on 1 April 1981. The reasons for vacancy are available only for the 24,000 local authority dwellings that have been empty for more than a year. Of these 11,700 were awaiting or undergoing repair or improvement and 4,500 were awaiting sale.

Mr. Dubs: Does the Minister agree that the hundreds of thousands of badly housed and homeless families find it extremely offensive that there are so many empty properties around them? They find it particularly offensive, when they live in areas such as Wandsworth, to see the numbers of empty council properties that are awaiting a purchaser. Does the Minister agree that that is a scandal? Will he monitor the situation more carefully and take steps to bring it to an end?

Mr. Stanley: Wandsworth council has a number of empty dwellings that are awaiting sale. The hon. Gentleman referred to a scandal. However, in the Labour-controlled city council of Manchester, of the number of dwellings that have been vacant for more than a year, the number awaiting sale was 596. Many people who are seeking houses find offensive the political position of the Labour Party which, in undertaking to repeal shorthold, will deliberately deprive many people of short-term rented accommodation.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: Does my hon. Friend agree that it would make a great deal of sense for local ratepayers if every council were required to publish a list, not only of council homes that have been standing empty for more than three months, but of any council homes that have been refused by two sets of people to whom they have been offered, so that other people can take over the homes and, if necessary, do the repairs themselves?

Mr. Stanley: I agree that more attention should be given to the number of local authority dwellings that are subject to two refusals. In some cases there are more than two refusals. The number of properties that have been standing empty for a long time feature in local authority HIP returns. If my hon. Friend would like to table a question on that matter, I shall give him details of all the empty properties, if he wishes.

Mr. John Evans: Is the Minister aware that in my constituency more than 100 excellent houses are standing empty which belong to the Home Office and were formerly prison officers' houses? Does he regard that as a scandal? Will the Minister suggest to his right hon. Friend, who is sitting next to him, that he should do something about those houses?

Mr. Stanley: As my right hon. Friend is next to me, I am sure he has heard what the hon. Gentleman said.

Mr. Squire: In view of the plethora of statements that my hon. Friend mentioned as coming from Labour hon. Members can my hon. Friend name one that will in any way reduce the problem outlined by the hon. Member for Battersea, South (Mr. Dubs).

Mr. Stanley: My hon. Friend is right. It is the Government who have introduced shorthold and encouraged homesteading and improvement for sale. It is a Conservative Government who have sought to resolve the problem of empty dwellings.

safety of the sovereign must be paramount. There has been an appalling lapse of security and I know that the whole House—and the country—will demand that the lessons of this incident must be learned so that the protection that we give to the Queen and members of her family is the best that can be provided.

Mr. Roy Hattersley (Birmingham, Sparkbrook): Is the Home Secretary aware that he has reported today on two distinct but obliquely related matters? On the question of Mr. Trestrail, and particularly his positive vetting, he has promised a report from Lord Bridge, the chairman of the security commission.

The Trestrail case raises complex matters of principle and practice, and I am willing to postpone comment on them until Lord Bridge reports to the Home Secretary, and the Home Secretary, as promised, reports to the House. On the other hand, is the Home Secretary aware that the numerous intrusions into Buckingham Palace can and must be commented on immediately?

Is it not appalling that breaches of security have happened so often and with so little response? After the previous incursions but before the events of 9 July were made notorious in newspapers, did the Home Secretary visit the palace to check on security? Did the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police visit the Palace to check on security? I am speaking of the period between the knowledge being received in Government and being made public in the newspapers. If they did not make such visits, why did they not make them?

Will the Home Secretary confirm, what is clear from his report, that the several incursions are the result of negligence at every level—failure by the police to respond effectively and urgently, slackness and weakness in supervision, and technical failures in security devices?

I share the Home Secretary's view that we must not jeopardise the prospects of a fair hearing for the officers who face disciplinary charges, but that does not apply to the entire force, and particularly to some very senior members of the Metropolitan force.

I believe that the whole House will agree that questions are necessary in a situation, which is almost beyond belief, in which the Queen, as the Head of State and a person particularly vulnerable to attack, should have been left in persistent danger.

I accept that the Home Secretary will take urgent and immediate action. I also accept that the action which he has reported today seems likely to prove effective. But one aspect of the whole incident continues to give great cause for alarm. Much of the report now in the Vote Office was quoted almost verbatim on television on Friday evening. If the report on royal security is not secure, what is secure, and how much faith can we place in those people who first leaked and who are now required to implement it?

Does the Home Secretary now agree that the bizarre story which he has told the House today is a further example of the inability of the Metropolitan Police successfully to discharge all the duties imposed upon it? It is too large, it attempts too many diverse tasks, it is badly managed, and it has no effective authority to control its actions.

Does not the evidence before the Home Secretary today, at least and at last, convince him of the need for a major revision in the governance and the organisation of

the Metropolitan Police? If he takes no action and if there are further failures and further fiascos, the responsibility will be his and his alone.

Mr. Whitelaw: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman's last point, I do not think that I have raised any question throughout about the responsibilities—not operational responsibilities—which I share in the final event. I have my responsibilities and I accept them, and no one can suggest that I have not accepted them over the last weeks.

I visited the palace after the other intrusions. I did not visit the palace for the purpose of examining security. It is important to remember that the operational disposition of police officers is a matter for the police themselves. If one breaches that position, one gets into very serious difficulties.

The senior officers visited the palace to check on security. I do not know whether the commissioner did, but certainly his very senior officers, who are directly responsible to him, did so.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to speculation and to what was said in the report getting to the BBC. Among the many things that I have been deeply upset about over the last fortnight, I was deeply upset about that. I checked very carefully and most of it could be regarded as at best informed speculation and no more. I believe that to be the case, because I have checked very carefully with all concerned.

With regard to the future of the Metropolitan Police, I accept—and so would the Commissioner—that there were grave mistakes on this occasion. It would be wrong not to recognise at the same time some of the remarkable achievements of the Metropolitan Police which have been seen in this House and in this country on many different occasions. One might even refer to the considerable work done by the Metropolitan Police in the tragic events of yesterday. It is wrong to look at one instance and one only.

Mr. Russell Kerr (Feltham and Heston): Come off it.

Mr. Whitelaw: No, that is only fair to the Metropolitan Police. One cannot condemn every officer in the Metropolitan Police for some particular instances. That would be wrong. I am only saying that mistakes must be judged but that at the same time there are successes. I do not think that anyone would deny that. I shall certainly consider what the right hon. Gentleman said about the organisation of the Metropolitan Police. I shall look very carefully into it and discuss it with the new Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, in October.

Mr. David Steel (Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles): The decision of the Home Secretary to establish a unified royalty protection department is welcome, but why were the steps that he has now taken not taken after the previous entries into the palace described in his document? Why was there not at that time the tightening up of discipline and the reorganisation that he has now announced? Why did it have to await the appalling incident of 9 July?

Is Lord Bridge to review the positive vetting procedures?

Mr. Whitelaw: On the right hon. Gentleman's second point, that is within Lord Bridge's terms of reference and no doubt he will do so.

With regard to the first point, the other intrusions were all properly and successfully repelled. It is important to remember that.

Mr. John Wheeler (Paddington): In view of the special responsibilities that Deputy Assistant Commissioner Smith is to assume, could my right hon. Friend tell the House about the experience that that officer has and why he in particular should do the job?

Mr. Whitelaw: He was recommended to me by the commissioner. He is 41 years old and joined the Metropolitan Police as a deputy assistant commissioner in May this year, having served as an assistant chief constable in the Thames Valley police and before that in Sussex, so he has had experience outside the Metropolitan Police, which I think is particularly important. He is also young and extremely well-equipped for the task.

Mr. John Morris (Aberavon): Does the Home Secretary recall the famous complaint of Mr. Macmillan when he was Prime Minister, that nobody told him anything?

Is it not extraordinary that the Home Office officials took such a long time to tell the Home Secretary of the events of the weekend? Is he satisfied with his control of his Home Office officials and his relationship with the Metropolitan Police? When precisely was he told of the other incursions into Buckingham Palace?

Mr. Whitelaw: With regard to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's second point about the affairs of Commander Trestrail, I am perfectly clear that I was told at the proper time in the proper way when I could be given a full report in order for me to come to Parliament at the earliest opportunity on Monday afternoon to make a full statement of all the facts. If I had not done that there would have been accusations of cover-ups of all types. No one can accuse me at any stage of the proceedings of having sought to cover up anything at all. I hope at least that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will give me the credit for that, because I have certainly not done so. With regard to the previous intrusion, I was warned on the telephone in my car as I was travelling north to my constituency in Cumbria. I was finally told at one o'clock when I got to my home on that Friday afternoon.

Mr. Mark Carlisle (Runcorn): Since the chief officer of police—in this case the Commissioner—and not the Home Secretary is totally responsible for operational matters within his force, is my right hon. Friend satisfied that there has now been established within the Metropolitan Police a sufficiently clear line of responsibility for the security of Her Majesty the Queen on all occasions?

Mr. Whitelaw: That is the purpose of the measures that the Commissioner has proposed to me, and which I have approved and announced to the House today.

Mr. George Cunningham (Islington, South and Finsbury): Does the Home Secretary appreciate that a Home Secretary of any other party would have been crucified by the House and by the media for this affair? Is it not important for us all to realise that what happened at the Palace was a spectacularly dramatic illustration of a type of inefficiency that is rampant throughout British institutions—the failure of superiors properly to supervise their subordinates? How many times in the past three years have I nagged the Home Secretary to get the Home Office properly to exercise its functions as the police authority for London? Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that there is not one civil servant in the Home Office exclusively

engaged on the job of police authority for London? Will he now take that matter more seriously in the future than he has in the past and perhaps have a meeting with London Members of Parliament to discuss how he will do it?

Mr. Whitelaw: I accept what the hon. Gentleman has said about the need to exercise the functions of the police authority of the Metropolis. I have taken that to heart. The organisation inside my police department is a matter for myself and my officials, but we shall take into account what the hon. Gentleman has said.

Mr. Edward Gardner (South Fylde): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on the measures that he has decided upon to improve the protection of the Queen and the royal family, but does he agree that one of the most extraordinary features of the break-in at Buckingham Palace on 9 July is that, following the murder of Earl Mountbatten, £2 million was made available for the improvement for security of Royal residences? In spite of that, is it not a fact that one alarm beam at Buckingham Palace was found to be at the wrong place and another, which might well have trapped the person who was trying to break in, was out of alignment? Does not my right hon. Friend agree that that was a most extraordinary state of affairs?

Mr. Whitelaw: Certainly, the expenditure of £2 million on improving the technological devices for the Royal residences in those years has been a considerable expenditure of taxpayers' money. I think that that is right. The failures on this occasion were serious, but I must return to what Mr. Dellow said and what is contained in paragraph 8 of the document that I circulated. He "emphasised that if police officers had been alert and competent, Fagan would have been apprehended well before he got close to the Private Apartments."

That is the essence of the matter. The technological equipment was there—in some cases it was not used and in other cases it was not observed.

Mr. George Foulkes (South Ayrshire): Has the Home Secretary noticed that there is usually quick action and vigilance immediately after such an event but that soon after there is a lapse into the previous poor practices? As a Member of the House was actually murdered, is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied with the security in the Palace of Westminster, since many hon. Members including myself have noticed a lapse in security over the past few weeks?

Mr. Whitelaw: I shall certainly discuss that matter with the House authorities but I must make it clear to the hon. Gentleman that the responsibility for security in the Palace of Westminster is a matter for the House authorities and that they must satisfy themselves on the matter.

Sir William Clark (Croydon, South): I am sure my right hon. Friend is aware that the more the fiasco at Buckingham Palace unfolds, the more astounded and shocked the British public are as to what went on. While one pays tribute to the bulk of the police force, surely my right hon. Friend will agree that there was sheer and gross incompetence on this occasion. While those involved must have a fair hearing, why is it that more people have not been suspended? Does my right hon. Friend agree that there must be something wrong with the law when, as I understand it, the intruder, Mr. Fagan, cannot be sued?

Mr. Whitelaw: My hon. Friend refers to the question whether Mr. Fagan should be prosecuted. I shall consider

at matter. The law of trespass is complicated, but I shall consider that matter with my right hon. Friend the Lord Chancellor and my right hon. Friend the Attorney-General.

With regard to my hon. Friend's first point, of those officers directly responsible for the supervision failure, one has resigned and one has been transferred to other duties.

Mr. Leo Abse (Pontypool): Are not the statements of the Home Secretary both on Monday and today a charter for blackmailers and a triumph for the lure of cheque-book journalism? Since Commander Trestrail has had no criminal offence charged against him and, despite the innuendo contained in the statement today, there has apparently been no breach of security on his part, is it not disgraceful that what has occurred is the substitution of public pillory for the penal punishment that this House rightly abolished? As a consequence, since it leaves open again the possibilities of blackmail, is it not more rather than less likely that there will be breaches of security as a result of the irresponsible statements made on both occasions by the Home Secretary?

Mr. Whitlaw: I should have thought that many people in the House and in the country would have believed that for an officer in Commander Trestrail's position to have had the association that he had with a male prostitute must have carried risks of blackmail. Surely it would have been criminally negligent not to pay attention to that information about a man in his position as soon as it came to the notice of the authorities.

Mrs. Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgbaston): Following the changes announced by the Home Secretary this afternoon, the most important question of all to ask my right hon. Friend is whether he can assure the House and the country that the Queen, who is inexpressibly dear to and honoured by her subjects, will henceforward always be safe in her own home?

Mr. Whitlaw: I would simply refer my hon. Friend to the best assurance that I believe any Government, any Parliament or any country can give, that the protection we give to the Queen and members of her family is the best that can be provided, always remembering that the safety of the sovereign must be paramount.

Mr. Arthur Davidson (Accrington): Since three young Germans managed to scale the Palace walls in June 1981 and it was then decided to make those walls more secure, why did it take more than 12 months to build an alarm system and a barbed wire fence? How could it have taken so long once the palace and the Metropolitan Police had been alerted to the dangers?

Mr. Whitlaw: I shall look into all those matters. The Property Services Agency does the work. It has been doing a great deal of work at all the other residences. I shall discover why it took so long.

Sir Bernard Braine (Essex, South-East): My right hon. Friend will know by now that there is deep disquiet in the country. The Queen's safety concerns not only him but every one of her subjects. While there may be general approval for the announcement today that there will be one executive officer responsible and that that is where the buck will stop, will my right hon. Friend say why, when

he is the police authority for the Metropolis, that officer reports to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and not on this matter directly to him?

Secondly, will Lord Bridge be able to recommend improvements in the palpably ineffective system of personal vetting?

Mr. Whitlaw: On the first point, the reason why this officer reports direct to the Commissioner is an important constitutional one, and it is that the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, like all chief officers of police throughout the country, is operationally responsible for his force, and the work at Buckingham Palace is one for which the Commissioner is operationally responsible in the constitution. That is most important, and it must be preserved for the future.

In answer to my hon. Friend's second point, Lord Bridge will be able to make such recommendations.

Several Hon. Members *rose*—

Mr. Speaker: Order. As the House is aware, I normally bring these questions to an end at four o'clock. I shall allow four more questions on either side, which will mean an exceptionally long time.

Mr. Geoffrey Robinson (Coventry, North-West): Does the Home Secretary agree that the most extraordinary aspect of the excellent report that has been put in the Vote Office by his Department is the fact that, following Earl Mountbatten's assassination, a complete review of royal protection arrangements was carried out with his agreement by the Metropolitan Police? That review cost £2 million, and it was completed barely 18 months ago. Yet in spite of that review and the £2 million that was spent, there has been an enormous lapse in the security arrangements. Does he not therefore agree that the buck has to stop somewhere for accountability, and that it cannot be left with the hapless Commander Trestrail? It has to stop somewhere else, if it is not to stop with the Home Secretary himself.

Mr. Whitlaw: I thank the hon. Gentleman for saying that the report is very full, and I am sure that the House will agree that everything that could have been put in was put in. I have held nothing back from the House. I am therefore grateful to the hon. Gentleman for what he said.

In answer to what he said about the work that has been done, I come back to what Assistant Commissioner Dellow said—that in the end much of the work that is done depends on those people who work it, and the officers who were responsible for working it. That is where the lapse of security came. I believe that this was a matter of supervision. The commander of the district concerned, who was directly responsible, has resigned from the force, and that is right.

Mr. Anthony Beaumont-Dark (Birmingham, Selly Oak): Is my right hon. Friend aware that, although examining the vetting procedure is vital and necessary, it must be stretching credulity beyond breaking point to believe that Commander Trestrail's proclivities for male prostitutes were not known by those who carried out the vetting? Does my right hon. Friend agree Lord Bridge should investigate the people who did the vetting and that any appointments made by those people and by Commander Trestrail must be investigated in their turn, to

[*Mr. Anthony Beaumont-Dark*]

make sure that the right people have been appointed, and that they were not subverted by the likes of Commander Trestrail?

Mr. Whitlaw: All these matters will be looked into by Lord Bridge, and it would be wrong for me to prejudge the outcome.

Mr. Christopher Price (Lewisham, West): As the measures announced by the Home Secretary will clearly involve extra public expenditure, and as Deputy Assistant Commissioner Smith's responsibilities will now extend beyond Buckingham Palace to other royal residences outside London, is it fair and right that the expenditure involved in this exercise should fall solely on the ratepayers of Lewisham and other London boroughs, and not be taken up as a national responsibility, as it clearly should be?

Mr. Whitlaw: The hon. Gentleman will remember that the arrangements for police financing mean that the Government give a direct 50 per cent. grant on all expenditure, and on top of that, a proportion of the rate support grant. That has been the way that police financing—

Mr. Price: We are responsible for 25 per cent.

Mr. Whitlaw: I believe that the method of police financing is correct, and I should like to stick to it.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): It may sound surprising, coming from me, but may I tell the Government and my right hon. Friend that they majority of Conservative Members have total confidence in my right hon. Friends and the Government in the steps that they have taken to deal with this shocking breach of security at Buckingham Palace, and that we are greatly encouraged by the proposition which my right hon. Friend has put to the House? I wish to ask him only one question. Will he ensure that, where police officers have been incompetent in the operation of their duties, they are dismissed rather than moved to one side, so that all right hon. and hon. Members can be totally confident that the security of Her Majesty is not only paramount in this House but paramount with the police?

Mr. Whitlaw: I thank my hon. Friend for what he has said. I take note of his second point, but as I have already said, it would be wrong for me to prejudge the disciplinary inquiries on the police officers concerned.

Mr. Andrew Faulds (Warley, East): Since the major resignation so far tendered would not have been required if Lord Justice Diplock's recommendations and comments on homosexuality had been accepted—

Mr. A. J. Beith (Berwick-upon-Tweed): Oh yes, it would.

Mr. Faulds: That is debatable; my argument is that the resignation would not have been required.

—and as no superior figure directly responsible for the major offence—the intrusion into the Queen's bedchamber—has yet resigned, when can we expect further resignations on this matter?

Mr. Whitlaw: I shall not enter into the debatable point. On the second point, I do not think that it would be reasonable for the hon. Gentleman to expect any more resignations.

Mr. John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge): Is my right hon. Friend aware that these grave events, which have deeply disturbed the whole nation, would have been the subject, in Her Majesty's Forces, of courts martial? Will there be similar undertakings in the Metropolitan Police, and will there be the necessary drastic reforms afterwards, so that the public can regain the confidence in the police which is so essential?

Mr. Whitlaw: Confidence in the police is essential. That is why I said that although these events cast doubts on and undermine that confidence, the many other actions taken by the Metropolitan Police and other forces point in the other direction. The disciplinary procedures will proceed, as is proper in a public service. They are different from the procedures in the Armed Services, but they will proceed, as is proper.

Mr. Michael English (Nottingham, West): The Home Secretary missed something out of his statement, and I hope that he will include it. Under the Secretaries of State—not just the right hon. Gentleman but all of them—the people responsible for Her Majesty's personal security are the Officers of the Household. In the light of what the right hon. Gentleman has said, I assume that he intends to introduce legislation to transfer that responsibility to himself and the police. For example, there is a person—I think his responsibility is outside the palace walls—the Master of the Horse, who has not offered his resignation. Can we ensure that, apart from sacking the monkeys, something will also be done about some of the organ grinders who have sinecure posts where they accept responsibility—admittedly unpaid?

Mr. Whitlaw: It is very unfair of the hon. Gentleman to attack those servants of the Queen who are not in a position to answer for themselves.

Mr. English: Some of them are on that Front Bench. They are Whips. They can answer here.

Mr. Whitlaw: By making the arrangements that I have with the new deputy assistant commissioner in charge of all royalty protection, working closely with the senior officers in Buckingham Palace and with the Household staff of the Queen and the senior officers of the Household Division, I believe that I have taken the right action. The operational responsibility will remain with that DAC who is responsible directly to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and not to anyone else.

Mr. Eldon Griffiths (Bury St. Edmunds): Bearing in mind the Diplock recommendation that the whole of the Civil Service should ordinarily not be subject to the rule that homosexual tendencies are a barrier to recruitment, and that that should be dealt with henceforth on a case-by-case basis, will my right hon. Friend confirm that henceforth all senior police officers who are put in security positions will be subject to positive vetting?

Mr. Whitlaw: That point was raised in Lord Diplock's report and the position is that positive vetting excludes most police officers other than the most senior ranks and members of the Special Branch. That is what Lord Diplock recommended and it remains the position.

Mr. Hattersley: The Home Secretary will be aware that most attention this afternoon has been focused on the performance of individual police officers. In the light of that, will he confirm that paragraph 9 of the document that he put in the Vote Office concludes:

"This divided organisation has not encouraged the professionalism and dedication that would have prevented the incident on 9th July."

Does he understand that most of the Opposition's complaints are not about Metropolitan policemen but about the structure and constitution of the Metropolitan Police?

Mr. Whitelaw: The right hon. Gentleman has already made that point to me and I have said that I shall consider it.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Why does not the right hon. Gentleman resign?

Mr. Speaker: Ten-Minute Bill, Mr. Dennis Canavan.

Mr. English: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I understand your natural reluctance and I have a natural reluctance to say what I am about to say. The fact that an hon. Member has walked out in a fit of temper does not mean that he is entitled to use the words that he just used of any person of any party who happens to hold your office. I shall repeat them if you wish, but I see no need to. However, the matter must be dealt with through an appropriate channel.

Mr. Speaker: In view of that statement, I shall send a message to the hon. Gentleman asking him to be in his place tomorrow. I did not hear the words. I am very fortunate because there is much that I do not hear. However, I shall ask him to be in his place tomorrow because it appears that he owes an apology to the House.

Mr. John Grant (Islington, Central): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I have always understood that where an hon. Member indicated to you that he had a constituency interest—Mr. Fagan is my constituent—it is customary to call that hon. Member. Will you comment on that?

Mr. Speaker: I did not believe that it was a constituency interest. The whole House has the same interest in the matter.

Mr. Grant: This is victimisation—

Hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Michael English (Nottingham, West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Grant *rose*—

Mr. Speaker: Will the hon. Member for Islington, Central (Mr. Grant) come back to his place? Very well. [HON MEMBERS: "Disgraceful."] The whole House can keep cool for a moment. The hon. Gentleman is obviously in a state of agitation.

Mr. Skinner: I think he has resigned.

Mr. Speaker: Has he? I am reluctant, in the absence of an hon. Member, to take any further action.

who, in the referendum campaign, advised people to vote "No" because a future Tory Government would produce better alternative policies for devolution in Scotland. They have produced nothing. We have waited three years for alternative proposals from the Tory Government. We have waited in vain that is why I am asking for leave to introduce the Bill.

All who are genuinely interested in a decentralised democracy ought to support me, because the Bill will be the beginning of a process of meaningful devolution of power, which will eventually be to the advantage of all the people of the United Kingdom.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dennis Canavan, Mr. Allen Adams, Mr. George Foulkes, Mr. John Home Robertson, Mr. David Lambie, Mr. William MCKelvey, Mr. R. McTaggart, Mr. David Marshall, Mr. John Maxton, Mr. Robert Parry, Mr. John Morris and Mr. Gerard Fitt.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Mr. Dennis Canavan accordingly presented a Bill to set up a Scottish Parliament; and for related purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Wednesday 20 October and to be printed. [Bill 174.]

Mr. Bill Walker (Perth and East Perthshire): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is it not an abuse of the House to introduce a Bill at this late stage in the Session when there is no hope of it ever being passed?

Mr. Speaker: I shall be brief, to save time, as many hon. Members wish to speak on the main business. I should not be surprised if we had another similar motion on Wednesday of next week, if it is in order.