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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

8 May 1984

2 Norman,

Thank you for your letter of 12 April about police pay and allowances.

As you will know, although I am responsible - together with the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Northern Ireland - for determining police pay and allowances, this follows negotiations in the Police Negotiating Board. The Official Side of the Board consists mainly of representatives of the local authority associations, who have first-hand knowledge of the burdens of police expenditure at local level and need no encouragement to consider ways in which savings might be made without detriment to the police service. Indeed, they have already taken action on rent allowances and the London allowance.

The Official Side tabled proposals for changing the existing basis of calculating rent allowances in January 1983. These proposals would reduce substantially the amounts paid to officers who became eligible for rent allowance from the date it was implemented, although officers already receiving the rent allowance would keep their existing allowance on a personal mark-time basis. Prolonged negotiations have failed to produce agreement and the issue has now been referred to arbitration.

The London allowance was first introduced in 1978 as an undermanning allowance. The Metropolitan Police is now almost up to full strength, but they have always found it more difficult to recruit than other forces. The allowance has not been increased since 1981. Last year the Staff Side tabled a claim for the London allowance to be increased in line with pay, on the grounds that the authorised establishment of the Metropolitan Police was artificially low and that, consequently, the force was still undermanned. The claim was rejected and will go to arbitration.

The review of police pay will take account of the wider aspects of the remuneration of police officers, but the tactics of the subsequent negotiations will need careful consideration. We shall be in a better position to make judgments when we have the results of the current review.

Copies of this letter go to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson,
George Younger, Jim Prior and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Lawson,

Lawson

Police: Police Pay - May 79.

1-0 MAY 1984





Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

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12 April 1984

The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP
Secretary of State for the Home
Department
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D. Leon

I read with interest your minute of 21 March to the Prime Minister on police pay, and the PS/Prime Minister's reply of 26 March. Your office have also been good enough, at my request, to supply me with details of the allowances paid to police officers.

2 I am sure that you will be conscious of the need for the review of police pay to take account of the wider aspects of remuneration to police officers. It is noticeable that some allowances seem, in the light of the figures which you circulated on police recruitment, to have lost their justification. The payment of £1,011 a year to Metropolitan and City of London police officers, in addition to a London weighting of £801 a year, seems a clear example of an allowance to improve recruitment which is no longer required. Also, the amount of rent allowances payable could well be considered to be excessive following the substantial relative improvement in pay of police officers.

3 I would not advocate changes in allowances in a way which led to an absolute level of pay award higher than would otherwise be necessary. But I think we should recognise the considerable cost of these allowances, and that their curtailment could reduce a further burden upon local government, particularly in the Metropolitan Police area.

4 Copies of this go to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, George Younger, Jim Prior, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Norman Tebbit
NORMAN TEBBIT

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