

PRIME MINISTER

DRUG MISUSE

1. The Home Secretary sent me a copy of his minute of  
28 September.

2. I agree with him that we must now act firmly. But the action needs to be effective. I support all his proposals except that we should now commit ourselves in principle to an initiative which is bound to be interpreted as a publicity campaign. Like him, I favour market research, but its purpose should be to help us decide whether such a campaign is likely to do more good than harm. At present we do not, in my view, understand the problems sufficiently to be reasonably confident on this score.

3. But I do believe that, for the substantial expenditure entailed in a publicity campaign, we could mount a worthwhile campaign via the local authorities and others to mobilize, and equip with the requisite knowledge and training, those parents, teachers, youth workers and all others, to whom the children and young people at risk look for guidance and who are best placed to make an impact on them at the point of risk.

4. I am copying this minute to Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Fowler, Douglas Hurd, Peter Rees, Kenneth Clarke and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

K

/ October 1984

HOME AFFAIRS · Drugs

Dec 82

1 OCT 1984

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~~CCNO~~

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP  
Home Secretary  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

NBPm

dc 4/10

4 October 1984

*Dear Leon,*

DRUG ABUSE

I see from the No 10 letter of 3 October that the Prime Minister has welcomed your proposal to announce and design an effective publicity campaign.

I would continue to urge you however to allow some room for manoeuvre in the announcement in case the market research should show that a publicity campaign might do more harm than good.

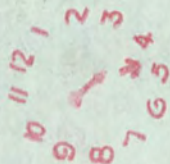
I am copying this to the Prime Minister and Norman Fowler.

*Ernest. Keir*

Home Affairs Dec 84

Drug Abuse

4 OCT 1984



Prime Minister

The Home Secretary's minute is at flag A; Sir Keith at flag B. I agree with Oliver letwin: this is a positive response for the Home

Secretary in an area  
2 October 1984 which the

MR FLESHER

DRUG ABUSE

Government was becoming vulnerable to criticism. Respond as proposed?

Yes mb

The Home Secretary's minute is most encouraging. He and his special adviser, Robin Harris, have used the Prime Minister's letter to spur officials into action, and it now appears that Ken Clarke will have something substantial to announce at the Conference.

JF

2/10

Keith Joseph's suggestion that teachers and others should be trained to spot and appropriately deal with drug-users is also a step in the right direction. But it does not need more money: the small amount of time and effort required by local authorities and teacher training colleges could easily be accommodated within existing budgets.

The only contentious issue is the proposed 'publicity campaign'. The Home Office want market research to design an effective campaign, whereas the DES want market research to find out whether a campaign would be effective. So far as we can see, this is an exercise in self-parody by the DES. If you want to achieve results, you obviously start by asking how to do something properly, and give up only if you cannot devise a solution.

We recommend that the Prime Minister should reply to the Home Secretary, thanking him warmly for his response and backing all his proposals, including the intention to announce and design an effective publicity programme, but adding support for Keith's wish to train schoolteachers.

Oliver Letwin.

OLIVER LETWIN

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*Oddi wrth yr Is-Ysgrifennydd Seneddol*



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*From The Parliamentary Under-Secretary*

NBPM  
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PRIME MINISTER

DRUG MISUSE

In Nicholas Edwards' absence abroad, I have seen a copy of the Home Secretary's minute of 28 September and of the Education Secretary's minute of 1 October.

Nicholas has of course been involved in the development of policy described in the Home Secretary's minute because of the Welsh Office's responsibilities for the health, social services and education aspects of drug misuse problems in the Principality. We certainly share the view of colleagues that firm action is needed and that it needs to be taken as quickly as possible. We have such action in hand.

Like Keith Joseph, however, we want that action to be effective and I am bound to say that we share his reservations for the same reasons about an open-ended commitment to a costly publicity campaign. The fundamental messages can still be got across to the conference, and in my view we could save ourselves considerable embarrassment later.

Copies go to Keith Joseph, Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, Geoege Younger, Norman Fowler, Douglas Hurd, Peter Rees, Kenneth Clarke and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

3 October 1984

WYN ROBERTS

*Wynn*



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CONDENSATOR

