

CONFIDENTIAL

ce/no.

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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

23 January 1985

*Peter*

*Await Ch Sec's  
reply*

*2ms  
23/1*

RAF MOLESWORTH

Since our discussion yesterday evening, I have given further thought to possible ways of giving Cambridgeshire additional financial help to meet the costs of policing at the two RAF bases at Molesworth and Alconbury.

I have considered a number of options and the effect at different levels of expenditure. I have come to the conclusion that the best course would be to adopt the same arrangements which we have used for financing the miners' dispute, but confining assistance to the additional costs arising from policing mass demonstrations at Molesworth and Alconbury. You will recall that for the miners' dispute assistance was based on a threshold of a one penny rate expenditure, above which special financial assistance was given. There was also a cut off point for the total share which a local authority would be expected to bear. The product of a 1p rate in Cambridgeshire is £0.9m. Additional costs up to that point would be shared equally between the Home Office and Cambridgeshire in the normal way. Beyond that point, we should meet 90% of the costs (that is, 50% police grant and 40% special payment). Cambridgeshire's total share would not exceed the product of a 2p rate. Thus, if costs were £1m, our share would be £0.54m; at £2m, £1.44m, and at £3m, £2.34m. Once the total expenditure exceeded a little over £3m we would meet all the further costs. Using this arrangement will have the advantage that we can easily apply the system for administering the miners' dispute special payment.

I have considered whether we should reveal only part of our proposals at this stage, as we did with the miners' dispute. I have concluded that if the county council are to settle their budget next week with the necessary degree of confidence we shall have to reassure them that there will be a limit to their share, and that below their limit a specified proportion of the costs will be met. I would, however, propose to say nothing about the period beyond the financial year 1985/6 since that is outside the period to which the budget applies.

I propose, therefore, that I should tell Cambridgeshire that we shall be prepared to give special financial assistance in meeting the additional costs of policing mass demonstrations at Molesworth and Alconbury in 1985/6 on the same basis as the assistance which we are giving with the costs of policing the miners' dispute. I shall give further thought to the handling of this news.

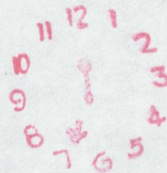
I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Patrick Jenkin, George Younger, Michael Heseltine and John Wakeham.

*[Handwritten signature]*

The Rt Hon Peter Rees, QC MP

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23 JAN 1985



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*Prime Minister CCND*  
*To note AT 24/1*

*Mr Tumbull*

*To note agreement reached.*

*Dub*  
*24/1*

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

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

*24* January 1985

*Leon Brittan*

RAF MOLESWORTH

Thank you for your letter of 23 January about the arrangements for special financial assistance for policing mass demonstrations in 1985-86. *att.*

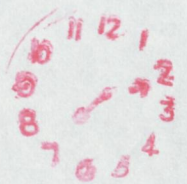
In all the circumstances I am content with your conclusion that the best course would be to make the special assistance available on the basis which applies for the additional costs of policing the miners' dispute. As and when additional costs arise at Molesworth and Alconbury, I would look to you to meet the cost of extra grant payments from either the police or other elements in your cash-limited programmes.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Patrick Jenkin, George Younger, Michael Heseltine and John Wakeham.

*Peter Rees*

PETER REES

24 JAN 1985



NBMM  
AT  
8/2

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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

8 February 1985

*Dear Peter,*

RAF MOLESWORTH

Thank you for your letter of 24 January. I am glad that we have been able to reach agreement on the arrangement for special financial assistance for policing any mass demonstrations at Molesworth and Alconbury.

As regards finding offsetting savings for the cost of any additional grant which might have to be paid, I should of course do what I could, but you will understand that no allowance has been made in our Estimates for this purpose and I cannot rule out the possibility of having to seek assistance from the Reserve.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

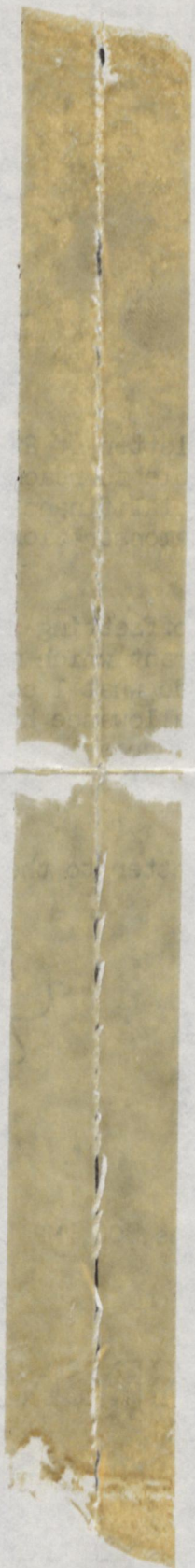
*M. Carr,*  
*LCM*

The Rt Hon Peter Rees, QC, MP

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Defence: Rhing of Demonstrations 2/83

PREM 19/1846





file 84

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

28 January, 1985

Thank you for your letter of 25 January. The Prime Minister has seen and noted the terms of the Home Secretary's letter of 25 January to Cambridgeshire County Council.

DAVID BARCLAY

N. A. Pantling, Esq.,  
Home Office

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'D. Barclay', written in a cursive style.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



50. -  
Prime Minister (2) HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

Agreement has been  
reached on help for

25 January 1985

Dee, David, Cambridgeshire.

Sub  
25/1

Following the Prime Minister's recent discussions with the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for the Environment about the representations received from Cambridgeshire Members concerning the financial arrangements for policing at RAF Molesworth and Alconbury, I enclose a copy of the letter the Home Secretary has today sent to Councillor Mrs Blatch, Chairman of the Cambridgeshire County Council.

Copies of the Home Secretary's letter have been sent to the Rt Hon Francis Pym, John Major, Sir Anthony Grant, Dr Brian Mawhinney and Robert Rhodes James.

Copies of this letter and its enclosure go to the Private Secretaries to the Secretaries of State for Defence, Scotland and the Environment, the Chief Secretary and the Chief Whip.

mt

James  
Nigel

N A PANTLING

David Barclay, Esq.





QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

25 January 1985

2 Mrs Blatch,

In the light of the representations to me from Cambridgeshire Members, I have been giving further thought to the question of the financial arrangements for policing at Molesworth and Alconbury. As I said in my letter of 14 January, we cannot foresee now the scale of policing which may be needed in the coming months. However, I accept that if there are mass demonstrations of the kind which took place at Greenham Common in 1983 and 1984 there are likely to be heavy policing costs.

I thought it would be helpful to the County Council, in settling their budget for next year, to know that the Government will be prepared to give special assistance in meeting the additional costs of policing mass demonstrations at Molesworth and Alconbury in 1985-86 on the same basis as the assistance which we are giving with the costs of policing the miners' dispute. This means that the Home Office would meet 50% of the costs, up to the product of a 1p rate (£0.9M); beyond that, we should pay 90% (50% police grant and 40% special payment). So if the costs of policing mass demonstrations reached £3M, as you suggested in your letter, the Home Office would pay ~~£2.34M~~ £2.34M, leaving £0.66M to be found by the County Council. If the costs were £2M, the Home Office would pay £1.44M. But the County Council's share of the costs would be limited to the product of a 3/4p rate; consequently, if the costs exceeded just over £3M, the Home Office would meet all the further costs. I am confident that the police authority and the Chief Constable will do all they can to ensure that the arrangements for policing mass demonstrations are cost-effective, and because of this, I feel I can give you this assurance about the financial arrangements at this stage.

The question of a disregard under section 8 of the Local Government Finance Act 1982 is, of course, a matter for Patrick Jenkin. He has told me that he will give very sympathetic consideration to any application from the County Council for a disregard, should that prove necessary.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Margaret Shaw, as Chairman of the police authority.

Yours sincerely  
L. Blatch

Councillor Mrs E M Blatch, CBE.