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*file*

*D&G*

*CF surely this should be on your file.*

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

9 January 1985

*Dear Hugh,*

Thank you for the briefing provided for the Prime Minister's lunch with the Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioners at New Scotland Yard today.

Discussion was individual, rather than general, and no specific points of action arose. But three matters came up which the Prime Minister mentioned to the Home Secretary this afternoon.

The first was that the Commissioner mentioned the need for extra manpower, and said that he was already pursuing this with the Home Office. When the Prime Minister reported this to the Home Secretary, she said (drawing on her constituency experience as well as her conversation at Scotland Yard) she believed there was a case for a further increase in the size of the force, bearing in mind the increase in certain types of crime, and the increase in the number of officers required for personal protection duties. The Commissioner had argued that an addition of the order of 3,000 men was needed. The Home Secretary agreed to look into this, though he commented that the Commissioner was already engaged on a formidable programme of reorganisation designed to use more effectively the increased resources which the Government had already provided.

Secondly, the Prime Minister said that there had been discussion about the variable quality of Special Branch operations outside London. It was disturbing, for example, that the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire had said, when she visited the region, that he had little or no advance information about the organisation of picketing.

Thirdly, there had been reference to police surveillance at the ports. She had gained the impression from her conversation at lunch that the major ports were no longer covered to the extent, and with the degree of co-ordination, that they had been in the past and she thought that there was a case for restoring responsibility for this function to the Metropolitan Police.

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*BAI.*

The Prime Minister said that she would be grateful if the Home Secretary would investigate these three points, and let her have a note on them in due course.

Yours ever,

Robin Butler

Hugh Taylor, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

Prime Minister

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on the three points raised with you over lunch at  
Scotland Yard.

These are comments  
HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

FEBB

28.2. 27 February 1985



Dear Robin,

Thank you for your letter of 9 January, recording three points  
which arose from the Prime Minister's lunch at New Scotland Yard.

First, Metropolitan Police manpower. Our general policy on police  
manpower is that we do not approve applications from police  
authorities for increases unless we are satisfied that the existing  
manpower is used as effectively as possible. With Home Office  
encouragement, Sir Kenneth Newman has undertaken major reviews of  
organisation and deployment in the Metropolitan Police. He has made  
significant progress in redeploying police officers from administrative  
work to operational duties: since 1982, we have agreed that over  
800 more civilian staff can be recruited to take on the administrative  
work. With the increases the Home Secretary has approved for 1985/86,  
the police establishment will have increased by 576 in the same period,  
and this takes account of the need for more officers for duties such  
as royalty and diplomatic protection. The number of police officers  
in the force has increased by 4,500 since May 1979; this is about the  
number of the entire force in Merseyside, one of the largest provincial  
forces.

We consider there is scope for the existing manpower to be deployed  
even more effectively. The Commissioner will be implementing his  
major re-organisation of the force during the next two years. This

F E R Butler, Esq

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should release more manpower, particularly from Headquarters. At this stage, the Home Secretary would be reluctant to agree to any further increases in manpower (there is no PES provision for any increase in 1986/87). He thinks some pressure needs to be kept on the Commissioner, in order to achieve the maximum benefits in improved efficiency from the re-organisation.

Your letter also referred to discussion about the variable quality of Special Branch operations outside London. The Prime Minister recalled that the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire had said, when she visited the region, that he had little or no advance information about the organisation of picketing. It has indeed been difficult for the police to get information about the organisers of picketing. The Home Secretary has given detailed consideration to this recently and considers that this has been the major gap in police capability disclosed by the strike. The Leicester Unit is continuing to assist police forces in the collation and interpretation of information, but we clearly need, in any future policing operation with a national dimension, to be in a position to arrange for any necessary centralised intelligence unit to operate right from the start. The Home Secretary has made plain to chief officers of police the importance he attaches to this aspect, and Sir Brian Cubbon will be discussing it with them shortly, with a view to taking early and effective action to remedy this deficiency.

There is also to be a review of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch and of its links with provincial Special Branches, in relation to the IRA threat.

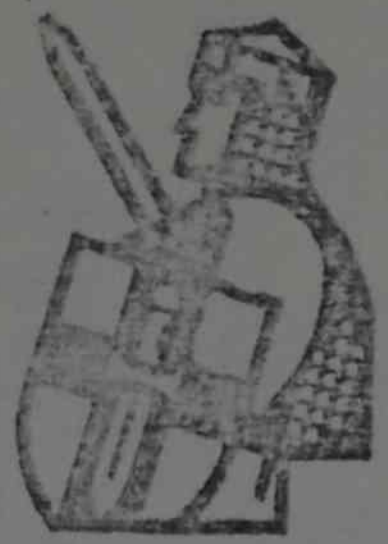
Police surveillance at ports, the current position is that the police units carrying out these duties are staffed and run by officers of the police force area concerned, and their operations are the responsibility of individual chief officers, although the Metropolitan Police does exercise a degree of co-ordination nationally, acting as a central source of information, advice and training. Until 1978 the Metropolitan Police Special Branch (MPSB) were rather more directly involved in the policing of some (although by no means all) ports. Over a period of ten years or so, MPSB officers had been seconded to help set up new port units and to provide occasional assistance and relief at others, though the operational responsibility remained with individual chief officers; MPSB's function was to make directly available the benefit of their experience and expertise at a time when port policing was expanding and taking new directions. Gradually, as the permanent policing of ports became established throughout the country, the Metropolitan Police was able to withdraw its officers from the provincial ports, the last returning in 1978.

Since the withdrawal of MPSB there has been no great reduction in the extent of coverage of ports: if anything, the overall scale is larger. There has, however, been cause for concern about the variable standard of port policing at different ports around the country, and this has been the subject of a study recently completed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary which had been commissioned by the Home Secretary following recommendations made in Lord Jellicoe's Report. In their report Her Majesty's Inspectorate have made a number of recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these units and the co-ordination of their work, and we are studying

carefully (their report does not, however, conclude that any greater involvement on the part of the Metropolitan Police is called for).

Yours ever,  
H H Taylor

H H TAYLOR



# Heroes of the thin blue line

## Shocking new figures on soaring police casualties

By ALUN REES and OWEN SUMMERS

**AN ALARMING** increase in violence against the police caused outrage last night.

A Daily Express investigation has revealed that every day in Britain 10 police officers are taken to hospital, the victims of brutal attacks.

The shocking statistic came to light

yesterday as another officer died after being stabbed on duty.

Detective Constable John Fordham, 45, a father of three, was struck down as he tried to serve a search warrant at a house near Brands Hatch, Kent.

The tragedy follows last week's sweet-shop knifing of Constable George Hammond, 47, in East Dulwich, South London. He was still fighting for his life last night.

A police spokesman said: "Being a copper is now the most dangerous job in the country. Fourteen thousand officers, including women, are attacked annually and some end up as cabbages."

The Express survey shows that:—

- Every year 1,000 policemen are so badly injured they qualify for payments from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

- Every other day a policeman's career ends with a medical pension after an attack.

- Since the abolition of the death penalty 20 years ago,

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three times more officers than previously are being murdered on duty.

Some MPs and the Police Federation called for the return of hanging for the murder of policemen and a minimum of five years for assault on an officer.

And they warn that the climate created by the picket line violence during the pit strike can only make the policeman's job even more hazardous.

Tony Judge, editor of the journal *Police*, said: "The ordinary officer is facing a viciousness unknown in the past and I'm not talking about picket violence."

MP Eldon Griffiths, who represents the Police Federation in Parliament, said: "I believe it is time that capital punishment was restored."

He was supported by fellow Tory Anthony Beaumont-Dark who said: "Society sub-contracts the police to deal with dangerous thugs. We should at least back them up with stiff penalties."

MP Teddy Taylor: "It is a total tragedy and we must protect the police who protect us."

Home Secretary Leon Brittan was said by his department to be "horrified" at the recent attacks on policemen.



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

1 March, 1985

Thank you for your letter of 27 February containing comments on the three points recorded in my letter of 9 January, which were raised at the Prime Minister's lunch at New Scotland Yard.

The Prime Minister was grateful to the Home Secretary for letting her have comments on these points, which she has noted.

E. E. R. BUTLER

H Taylor, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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