

Prime Minister.

You wanted to have a word with the Home Secretary about police manpower (see Flag A). At Flag E is a note you may find useful, which the Home Secretary sent after you lunch at New Scotland Yard.

12 June 1985

MEA 12/6

PC
/

PRIME MINISTER

POLICE MEETING WITH THE HOME SECRETARY, WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE

You are to see the Home Secretary to discuss the outcry by the Police Federation Conference last month. The complaints were set out in a note of 17 May (Flag A).

Issues you may wish to explore

1. Police Manpower

Police manpower fluctuates considerably. Attached are the total police strength figures (Flag B). The Home Office emphasise that, since 1979, the shortfall against establishment has improved. The Police Federation continue to say that the overall numbers of police are currently falling at a time when they are being given onerous new and increased duties.

Feb
720

Dropped -
now rising
Jan - 2 hrs
Sun payments

Whitworth
1984 - 1182
1985 - 1214

5% - 6.9%

Mid P.L.
25% short
Pay. Power
Non-manpower costs

2. Police Funding

The Home Office agree that DoE cuts have affected police funding. The meeting you had on drugs with the Home Secretary was interpreted by the Home Office as meaning that there may be new money for more police in this area.

3. Civilianisation

There has already been a considerable move towards civilianisation, which is much disliked by the police. The average in all forces is 19% civilianisation, and this is over and above the strength figures set out at Flag B. There are many more jobs that civilians could do to assist the police. You could call for a complete end to police serving summons and warrants for Magistrate's Courts and Crown Courts. The Home Office do not know precisely how many police would be saved, but there is a consensus - even amongst senior ACPO officers - that there is a substantial manpower saving here. If you wished to ensure that strike-permitting unions did not take over the civilian ranks of the police, this issue should be broached now. Possibly an auxiliary police force with this characteristic should be formed.

4. The Rent Allowance Issue

*in - by the police
Part of the...*

The Home Office strongly assert that the police misunderstand what the circular 90/84 was doing. They claim that the police have not understood that the new part in the circular which will allow the Home Secretary to take into account the rateable value of a selected house, as well as the assessment of the District Valuer, was a different issue from the one considered by the Police Arbitration Tribunal. The circular has been highlighted and is attached (Flag C). If the Home Office

*18 forces
10 and 22*

are right, they must make strenuous efforts to explain this misunderstanding to the police, because ~~the police~~ are at this moment in the process of commencing proceedings against the Home Secretary in respect of this circular. (I have not seen the writ which the Police Federation tell me they have issued during the last week.)

5. Additional Work for the Police

You have already discussed the question of drugs enforcement and football match control. In addition, the police can point to rising crime, in the Metropolitan Commissioner's Report out today, and the effects of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act which will apply its full rigour next spring. The latter was covered by the Home Secretary in his speech attached (Flag D). In all reports I received at Blackpool, and the debates I attended, this issue still causes considerable unrest.

Conclusion

The Home Office and the police currently have an arm's length posture. We recommend that you bring them together without the necessity of huge new injections of public money.

H. Booth.

HARTLEY BOOTH

MR BUTLER

POLICE

You will see from the attached note that the Prime Minister expressed a wish to have a word with the Home Secretary about the police, and in particular about manpower questions.

Hartley Booth's further note mentions that the police are considering taking legal action against the Home Secretary over rent allowances, and he now understands that papers have been served.

I have pencilled in a slot after Cabinet on Thursday, and Hugh Taylor is aware of the issues which may come up at the meeting, and will be providing a short note beforehand.

Unless you have any objections, I will confirm the slot with Hugh Taylor.

MAA

MARK ADDISON

10 June 1985

Mark Addison

Content. Pl. look
out the exchange with the
Home Office over Metropolitan
Police manpower following the PM's
lunch at Scotland Yard in January and put
in briefing folder.

FECS

11.6

CONFIDENTIAL

MR ADDISON

7 June 1985

POLICE

1. Following your query, I have sent a minute to the Home Secretary's Private Secretary, The Deputy Secretary for Police, Mr Partridge, and the Special Adviser in the Home Office, David Coleman. The Home Office are therefore fully in the picture.
2. The meeting would be most useful before the Cannon Row visit on 17 June. Would a ten minute slot after Cabinet on Thursday be possible?
3. Two issues I raised in my minute on 17 May have become more serious. Police numbers have declined further by 512 men in the last month, putting them 2,012 below establishment (today's figure from the Police Federation).

The police are taking legal action against the Home Secretary over allowances.

Hartley Booth

*Spic (Hyl) Taylor.
→ Beede Great Police relations
→ Addene*

HARTLEY BOOTH

CONFIDENTIAL

HARTLEY BOOTH

file (57) [Signature]

POLICE

The Prime Minister has seen your note of 17 May. She thinks it would be worth having a word with the Home Secretary about the issues you raise.

I think we might try to find a few minutes ^{after a meeting} at which both the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary are present to deal with this. The Home Office would be happy with that. They have asked, however, for a copy of your note so that they can ensure the Home Secretary is properly briefed. I do not see any particular difficulty in this, but perhaps you would consider it and arrange either for a copy to go across or for the gist of its content to be conveyed to Nigel Pantling.

Let us have a word early next week.

MARK ADDISON

29 May 1985

[Signature]