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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

Prime Minister 2

DLW

13/3

11 March 1986

Dear John,

POLICE MANPOWER

As you know, I have been conducting a review of police manpower in England and Wales, following events in the autumn and our undertakings that the police service should have the manpower and equipment it needs.

As a result of this review it is clear to me that there is a need for a substantial increase. Police manpower has grown significantly since 1979, but there is now provision in our spending plans for only a small further increase in 1986/87 and for none at all thereafter.

In the Metropolitan Police, I have concluded that the headquarters branches need around 550 more men, largely to deal with the increase in drug trafficking and other organised crime, and in the terrorist threat. Manpower on divisions is needed above all in order to increase the police presence on the streets: the force cannot at present provide an adequate response to incidents or an adequate presence at places where and at times when criminal activity or hooliganism regularly occurs. I consider that the present level of service is unacceptably low. The Commissioner of Police has said publicly that he thinks divisions need over 3,500 more officers. I do not accept that figure, but I am satisfied that well over 1,250 more officers are needed on divisions - more, certainly, than the force could expect to recruit in the PES period. I estimate the gross need of the force as a whole over the next four years as at least 1,800 police officers. Of this number, the force reorganisation will provide 200 in total; and civilianisation (if the civil staff ceiling is increased by 150 annually from 1986/87 to 1989/90) will release 100 officers a year - 400 in all. These figures result from studies which my officials have undertaken with the Metropolitan Police, and full details are of course available.

The Metropolitan Police already have authority for an increase of 50 police officers and 43 civilians in 1986/87. I would like to authorise an increase of a further 300 police officers and 107 civilians in that year (who would be recruited in and after the autumn, and the part-year cost of whom would be found from off-setting savings within the cash limit we have already agreed), and a further 300 police officers and 150 civilians in each of the years 1987/88 - 1989/90 inclusive.

The Rt Hon John McGregor, OBE., MP.

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As to the provinces, HM Inspectors of Constabulary advise that the gross additional need is likely to be of the order of 2,500-3,000 police posts in the next four years. They are needed mainly to increase preventive patrol strengths and so meet increasing public concern over disorder and hooliganism. In addition, HM Inspectors estimate that there is a need for 1,200 police civilians, of whom some 500 would replace police officers. An increase of 150 staff in the magistrates' courts service should enable a further 150 police officers to be released. 430 of the police posts are likely to be needed in 1986/87, leaving an assessed need of, say, 1,500 police posts and 1,200 civilians, excluding magistrates' courts staff, phased evenly over the PES period after 1986/87.

I attach a table showing the complete programme which I propose.

As I have indicated, no additional expenditure would occur in 1986/87 if the Metropolitan Police establishment were to be increased in that year by a further 300 and the civil staff ceiling by a further 107, though the increases would, of course, have to be funded for 1987/88 and later years. It is possible, but by no means certain, that the 430 additional provincial officers for 1986/87, if authorised fairly late in the year, could be accommodated within existing PES provision for that year. But here again the increases would have to be funded for 1987/88 and later years, and there might be a call on the reserve in 1986/87.

In broad terms, the cost of the whole programme would be about £30 million extra in 1987/88; £50 million in 1988/89; and £70 million in 1989/90. This is, of course, in addition to the large PES bids which will be necessary to make provision for inflation and police pay.

As you know, I am anxious that in authorising the police to increase manpower we should not relax our pressure on them to provide value for money. I would propose to monitor progress in the Metropolitan Police closely, in order to establish that the additional manpower is in fact being allocated as planned and is being used to the best advantage, and that the targets for the release of officers for operational duties by the force reorganisation and by civilianisation are being met. I shall call for a formal report from officials on these matters each February, and I shall make it clear to the Commissioner that each annual tranche of increases will be approved only if I am satisfied with the progress shown in that report.

So far as the provinces are concerned, the existence of provision in Government expenditure plans would not, I need hardly say, create an automatic entitlement to establishment increases. I would continue to consider applications from police authorities on their merits, in the light of an up-to-date assessment of need and of the effect of any previous increases, taking full account of the scope for redeployment and other efficiency measures, and I would continue to use my power of approving establishments in order to promote efficiency. I also, of course, have to be assured that police authorities will provide their share of the necessary finance.

Increases in police manpower may have an effect on other parts of the criminal justice system. I would propose to monitor this carefully. It is difficult to foresee what the precise effects, if any, will be. There is not a simple mechanical link between police strength and other variables such as the number of prosecutions and the prison population. Accordingly I am not at this stage seeking matching increases in non-police resources.

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I hope that you will feel able to agree to my proposals. I think that there are powerful arguments, both on the merits and presentationally, for announcing the whole of the programme (i.e. up to the end of 1989/90) as a single package, rather than taking it year by year. This would introduce some welcome stability into the police manpower scene in the medium term. A clear view of the future prospects would also make it easier for chief officers, especially the Commissioner, to pitch their recruitment at the right level and would put them in a better position to plan the most effective deployment of additional manpower. Presentationally, the political impact of a comprehensive announcement would obviously be far greater than one which looked only one year ahead. I consider that we need to make a strong announcement, both to show that we are responding to public concern about crime, and to improve police morale which, especially in London, was given a sharp jolt by the recent disorders. If our plans come out in dribs and drabs we shall be under continuous pressure to do more. A clear and early announcement would put us in a very strong position with our own supporters, and with the Labour Party, which has shown signs of exploiting in an opportunistic way the public desire for more policemen.

I would like to make an announcement before Easter if possible. I understand the difficulties of anticipating PES in this way. But the Prime Minister's remarks at Blackpool generated expectations that we would reach rapid conclusions on police manpower, and this sense of urgency was carried over into the reviews which I set in hand. Our position would become increasingly difficult to explain and justify if an announcement had to be held back. An early announcement, in advance of the provisional announcement in July of the main components of the RSG settlement, would also have the advantage that the signal given to local authorities on that occasion would not be weakened.

Even without any increases in manpower I remain, as you know, of the view that there would have to be some easement, in relation to the police service, of the general downward pressure on local government expenditure before we could confidently expect local authorities to increase their own spending on the police to match central Government plans. The recent increase in the rate of police grant to 51 per cent was a useful interim measure to meet the immediate difficulties, primarily those of the new joint police authorities in the metropolitan areas, but it was not, of course, intended to solve the longer term problems. The way forward on this is the further work which E(LA) has commissioned on long-term options for improving the incentives for police authorities to maintain or increase police spending and I hope that it will be possible to make early progress on this work. I have instructed my officials accordingly.

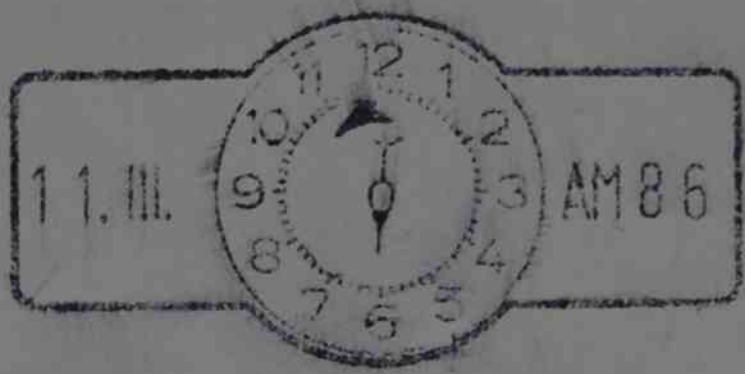
I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and the other members of E(LA), and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours,
Douglas

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PROPOSED MANPOWER INCREASES

	<u>1986/87</u>	<u>1987/88</u>	<u>1988/89</u>	<u>1989/90</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
METROPOLITAN POLICE					
Police	300	300	300	300	1,200
Civilians	107	150	150	150	527
PROVINCIAL FORCES					
Police	430	500	500	500	1,930
Civilians	-	400	400	400	1,200
MAGISTRATES' COURTS' STAFF	-	100	50	-	150
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	837	1,450	1,400	1,350	5,307
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Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd CBE MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1

Dear Douglas,

POLICE MANPOWER

Thank you for your letter of 11 March.

Your proposals affect both 1986-87 and subsequent years, and while I recognise that they are presented as a single package, I think they raise rather different issues and I should like to deal with them separately.

As regards 1986-87, it was only last month that we announced an increase in police specific grant to 51 per cent. One of the reasons you adduced publicly for that increase was to give police authorities an incentive to keep police forces up to strength. I think there are risks entailed in following that announcement so quickly with a further announcement of increased establishments, while police forces are still some 1,700 below establishment.

Moreover, apart from the Metropolitan Police, for whom the extra staff you propose could be contained within the recently agreed and announced cash limit of £851.8 million, there are practical difficulties for other police authorities.

They will not have made provision for the increases in their spending plans for 1986-87. They have already set their precepts and they no longer have the power to make a supplementary precept. Although additional expenditure on the police would attract 51 per cent police grant, it would cause the authorities - and particularly

Per Minute

*The three other minutes
is attached. This is a*

27 March 1986

*petty dusty
response, which
Mr Hurd
will wish
to challenge*

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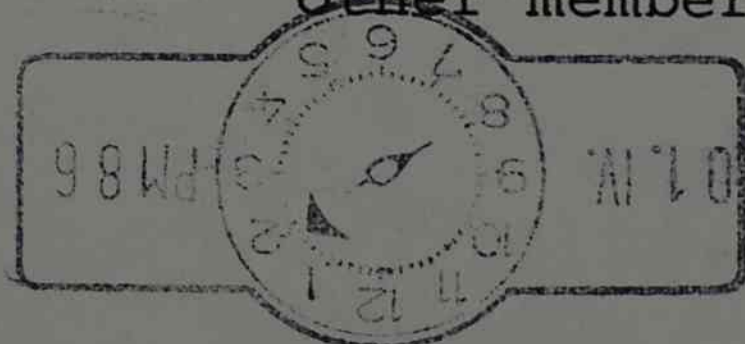
the Joint Boards - to lose block grant. So if they are to spend more on the police they will have to squeeze spending elsewhere or dip into their balances. There may be some scope for the shire counties to do this, though there are all sorts of other pressures on their spending. We have no mechanism for ensuring that they do divert resources to the police. This last point, of course, applies to all police authorities in Scotland. But I do not see how you would propose to allow the Joint Boards to finance an increase in their spending. They cannot reduce their spending on other services, nor can they increase their precepts. I should be interested in any comments Kenneth Baker may have on the points.

My further concern is the signal to local authorities in 1986-87. The prospect is for a very large overspend in 1986-87, which will constitute a substantial claim on the Reserve. To urge authorities to increase their spending at the same time as overspending on that scale emerges could damage the credibility of our public expenditure plans.

Any increase in manpower in 1986-87, including that for the Metropolitan Police, will require additions to provision in later years, even before we consider further additions to manpower in those years. You will have now seen letters from Nicholas Ridley and Kenneth Baker expressing concern that decisions on police manpower for 1987-88 and beyond should be made now and in isolation, in effect pre-empting the decisions on local authority expenditure which we will make in the Summer. I share that concern. The sums involved are considerable - the manpower increases for police and magistrates courts alone would add £39 million, £60 million and £81 million to the baseline in each Survey year. This is before taking any account of likely police pay settlements which would add much greater amounts to police provision. I do not think that it would be right to agree now to such substantial additions before we have even considered the general picture on other colleagues' services.

I gather that our officials are to discuss in more detail the merits of the case for the increases in establishment you propose. Officials are also still due to report back to E(LA) on ways of ensuring that local authorities do take account of government priorities for police spending. While I understand your desire for an early announcement I believe that we should wait for the report and for our general E(LA) discussions before committing ourselves for the entire Survey period. We will then be able to make it clear to local authorities how our policies on the police fit with our overall strategy on local authority expenditure.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the other members of E(LA) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.



Yours ever,
John MacGregor

JOHN MacGREGOR

NOTE FOR THE FILE

26 March 1986

POLICE MANPOWER

	<u>1985</u>	<u>Up since</u> <u>1979</u>
National Police Manpower (England & Wales)	120,791	+9,298
Civilian	<u>39,403</u>	<u>+4,773</u>
Total Police Manpower	160,194	+14,071
Establishment	122,800	
	<u>45,300</u>	
Total	167,800	
Metropolitan Police Manpower	26,870	
Civilian	<u>13,168</u>	
Total	43,038	+5,976

HB.

HARTLEY BOOTH

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LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

Prime Minister 2

JRS

25 March 1986

Im Mm

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POLICE MANPOWER

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I have seen a copy of Douglas' letter to you of 11 March.

I fully appreciate his concern that the police should have sufficient resources and manpower at their disposal to enable them to deal adequately with the many problems which they must face: these are important matters to us all.

However, I think it would cause considerable difficulty if we were to start taking decisions about provision for the police outside of our consideration of overall local authority expenditure later in the year. Increased provision for the police would of course attract police grant and there would therefore be consequences for AEG and rate levels in 1987 and 1988 in what Douglas is proposing. We will need to consider these most carefully at the appropriate time.

As Douglas mentions, E(LA) has commissioned further work by officials on long term options for financing the police and I too very much hope that sufficient progress will be made to enable this to be taken into account in our discussions on the 1986 round.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and the other members of E(LA) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

KENNETH BAKER

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POLICE PONY 1/83





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
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01-212 3434

The Rt Hon John MacGregor OBE MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury
HM Treasury
Treasury Chambers
Parliament Street
LONDON SW1P 3AG

*Prime Minister²
The opening
stroke in this year's battle.*

19 March 1986

*DLW
21/3.*

DW.

Dear John

POLICE MANPOWER AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

I have seen copies of Douglas Hurd's and Keith Joseph's letters of 11 March to you, about additional expenditure and grant requirements for the police and in-service teacher training. I am sure that both, especially an increase in police manpower, are important, and I support them.

We have not, however, yet come to any decision about the size of the total local authority expenditure provision for 1987/88, which is to be discussed collectively in E(LA). I would not be able to accept that extra expenditure in either case should be at the expense of provision for other local government services. That applies to future years as much as to 1987/88. I fear I can see no scope for any compensating reductions in the transport subheads. For the largest one - road maintenance - the results of our latest Road Condition Survey just made public show a depressing deterioration in the condition of local authority roads, and the extra programme of bridge strengthening required to meet European commitments on lorry weights will be expensive. I intend to continue the reduction in expenditure in Metropolitan areas on public transport and concessionary fares by means of the ELs; but you will recall that in 1986/87, expenditure by the Transport Joint Boards in excess of their GRE total is being met from the Reserve. I am sure that other spending colleagues also face considerable difficulties.

I am similarly concerned about the impact on the use of AEG. You drew attention in your letter of 11 March to the diversion of resources within an (unfixed) total of AEG that would be brought about by the increase in Education Support Grant. That was only a small grant

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sum, and I had no objection to it. The grant aspects of increased police expenditure are being studied by officials in advance of further discussion in E(LA), and the AEG implications of the new in-service teacher training grant are, I understand, not yet decided. But it would concern me if you wished to insist that this too, and any increased police grant, should be subtracted from a notional AEG total to the detriment of Block Grant or the amounts for other specific and supplementary grants. I am writing to you separately about arrangements for setting the TSG total, following the difficulties I described at the last meeting of E(LA).

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, other members of E(LA) and (H), to David Young and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Y
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Nicolson*

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

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