



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

8 April 1980

Dear Nick

A GREEN PAPER ON PUBLIC ORDER

Thank you for your letter of 31 March which I have, of course, shown to the Home Secretary.

The Home Secretary readily accepts that the draft Green Paper covers some highly contentious matters, and has re-considered, in the light of the Prime Minister's comments, whether it is necessary for them all to be dealt with. He takes the view that, since the Green Paper is not a statement of Government policy, it should face these issues squarely and let the Conservative Party, Parliament and the public see the considerable difficulties in this area as they really are. If the Prime Minister disagrees, the Home Secretary will, of course, be prepared to modify the draft Green Paper, but his judgment, after reconsidering the matter, is that it should (subject to what is said below) be published as it stands.

The Home Secretary has asked me to take the opportunity of this letter to thank his colleagues for their comments on the draft Green Paper, and in particular to say that he agrees with the views expressed in the Chief Secretary's letter of 31 March that too high a price should not be paid for the freedom to demonstrate, and that this point should be brought out still further in the Green Paper. Officials here have been asked, in consultation with Treasury officials, to make some amendments to the draft accordingly.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the recipients of the Home Secretary's minute of 26 March.

Yours sincerely
Tony Butler.

A. J. BUTLER

N. J. Sanders, Esq.

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