



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

W Rickett Esq
Private Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office,
10 Downing Street,
London. SW1

NBPM
J
30/9/82

28th September 1982

Dear Mr. Rickett,

I enclose, for your information, a copy of the minutes from the meeting Mr Macfarlane had with the Football Association on Friday 24 September.

Yours sincerely

f. wells.

MISS F WELLS
Private Secretary

NOTE OF A MEETING WITH THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION ON FRIDAY
14 SEPTEMBER 1982, IN ROOM N15/15A, 2 MARSHAM STREET, AT 2.30PM

Those present:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr Neil Macfarlane MP (Minister for Sport)
Mr Norman Palmer
Mr Brian Burnett
Mr Ron Fosker
Mr Warwick Smith (PS Mr Macfarlane)

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Mr Bert Millichip
(Chairman)
Mr Ted Croker (Secretary)
Mr Leslie Walker
(Liaison Officer)

Mr Macfarlane said that he was particularly concerned that the success of Spain and Rotterdam had been followed by trouble in Copenhagen. He asked the FA to let him have within the next 10/12 days a confidential analysis of just what had gone wrong.

He explained that it was not possible for the Government to withdraw passports; the Treaty of Rome permitted free passage of European Citizens, there were no powers to withdraw or withhold passports for this sort of offence, and in any case it was impossible to sort out the good from the bad. The UK now only had visa arrangements with 4 per cent of the World, and only with Warsaw Pact Countries in Europe. It was not possible to impose further restrictions.

Mr Macfarlane made a series of proposals -

a. following its success over the World Cup, Mr Macfarlane proposed that a widened liaison group (to cater for domestic matches as well where necessary) should be reconvened under Mr Millichip's chairmanship. All relevant Government Departments would be represented, and it was important that everyone else concerned gave their assistance. The Minister proposed that the group should look at the next England away match against Greece on 17 November;

b. following the success of good local and central links in Spain, Mr Macfarlane offered the services of his officials to liaise with the Greek authorities via the British Embassy in Athens if the FA wished;

c. Mr Macfarlane said that he recognised that it would be impossible totally to eliminate the black market in tickets, but he looked to the FA to harness their supporters' club in such a way that tickets for England away matches would be sold only to those possessing a membership card. This would be a deterrent to some, though the Minister recognised that others would travel abroad and attempt to get into the ground anyway. His concern, however, was

with what took place on the terraces, rather than on the street. His proposal would mean controlling the sale of tickets, in this country through accredited agents only, and only to those who presented their supporters' club membership card; and abroad only at the stadia, and again only upon presentation of a membership card;

d. Mr Macfarlane was seeking a meeting, as soon as possible, with his European counterparts. He would ask them to do all they could to get their football authorities to fall in line with the British proposals.

Mr Millichip said that the Minister had presented a wide package, and promised that the FA would follow up each point. He still remained of the opinion that the only way to prevent violence at matches was to stop people going, but he recognised the difficulties. He welcomed the Minister's offer of help by his officials in advance of the game in Athens. Mr Millichip also welcomed Mr Macfarlane's proposal to seek political support from his counterparts in Europe, since he felt that UEFA would not respond positively to an approach from the FA.

Mr Croker said that England playing abroad attracted foreign hooligans. To counter the problem, the FA asked foreign police to take immediate and firm action against misbehaviour; this often led to an increased number of arrests, thus exacerbating the problem in the eyes of the media. There was no trouble during the match in Copenhagen, other than a smoke bomb which was thrown by Danish supporters. Much of what happened afterwards took place outside the ground, and generally the Danish Authorities were pleased with what they saw as well behaved fans. There was some evidence that the fighting after the match had been sparked off by Danish fans, and was made to look worse than it really was by TV camera angles.

Mr Croker was concerned that the practice of not charging those arrested, but just deporting them, meant that the FA were unable to discover the hooligans' identity. He felt it unreasonable to ask foreign football authorities to limit sales of tickets, even on the basis of production of membership cards which, with the language difficulties, might be open to abuse anyway. He was concerned to stop unscrupulous travel agents operating.

Mr Macfarlane said that that was why he wanted the FA to reconvene the liaison group before the match against Greece. He wanted to impress on the Greek government that England did not want any trouble and to see how all matters could be sorted out. The Minister said that identification of hooligans was a major part of his package: the supporters' club membership card would help identify people, and the system which he was proposing would put UEFA on the spot. He was keen to see a "yob case study".

Mr Palmer pointed out that the UEFA rules stated that the control of tickets should be handled in co-operation with visiting Associations or clubs, and he felt that this meant that Mr Macfarlane's proposals were already provided for. He agreed to let Mr Croker have all details of Copenhagen once they became available. Mr Croker reiterated that it was essential to find out the identity of hooligans, since the people who followed England and caused trouble were the same as those who caused trouble at domestic club matches. He felt that the Government, which took a substantial amount of money from football through pools duty, should put some back by making arrangements to prevent hooligans from attending football matches by further use of attendance centres.

Mr Macfarlane summarised -

- a. He would receive the FA's assessment of what went wrong in Copenhagen within the next 10 to 12 days;
- b. the FA would quickly recall the liaison group;
- c. DOE officials would help in preparation for the match against Greece;
- d. the FA would seriously consider ways and means of using supporters' club membership cards to control admission to foreign stadia in which the English team was playing.

Private Office

Department of the Environment

24 September 1982