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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Personal Minute

No. M2/85

HOME SECRETARY

*Dear Leon,*

FOOTBALL VIOLENCE

I saw earlier today the police video of the Huddersfield/Leeds match last October. Giles Shaw, Neil Macfarlane and Lord Aberdare were present. The film is a profoundly shocking reminder of the scale of the problem we face. It demonstrated beyond any doubt that many people attend football matches for the purposes of fighting and not to watch the game.

We do, of course, already have in hand a number of important measures to tackle the problem, and in particular, we intend that the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol) Bill will be in force by the beginning of the season. But, having seen the film, I am concerned that there are a number of other points which we and the football authorities should be looking at urgently, some of which are particularly important if we are to ensure that wider steps have been taken by the beginning of the season to avoid the recurrence of outbreaks of violence.

We therefore agreed that:

- i. Giles Shaw would arrange for the video to be given a wider circulation. In particular, Mr. Justice Popplewell and the Magistrates' Association should see the film.

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- ii. Giles is looking into the possibility of amending the regulations relating to police bail, to give the police powers to ensure that those charged with violent offences in connection with football should not be able to attend matches.
  
  - iii. Giles will consider the possibility of extending the maximum time limit of six months which can elapse between commission of the offence of threatening behaviour and charge, so that the police are not debarred from laying charges if it takes more than six months to establish the identity of a miscreant. We shall need to consider effecting this change through the Public Order Legislation.
  
  - iv. Giles will be considering the possibility of making proper CCTV facilities a condition for issue of a safety certificate under the legislation on sports ground safety.
  
  - v. We must ensure that sufficient CCTV coverage is in place for the fixtures at grounds most at risk next season, which begins on 25 August. Lord Aberdare is, of course, taking forward the allocation of the extra £500,000 to help clubs with this. But it is crucial to ensure the equipment is operational by the time these matches are played. Neil Macfarlane is, therefore, drawing up a list of the fixtures at risk during the opening weeks of the season and will be discussing this further with the Football Authorities on Thursday.



The film also convinced me that we are right to be pressing the Football Authorities on membership cards as a way of preventing these hooligans using football as a vehicle for their violence. The film also underlined the importance of controlling the extent to which supporters travel to away matches. If rival fans cannot be prevented from clashing when they meet they must be stopped from meeting.

I am sending a copy of this minute to Patrick Jenkin, Giles Shaw and Neil Macfarlane.

*Y  
Lounsbury*

*Raymond*

10 July, 1985