



Prime Minister
Mr Macfarlane's letter to MPs,
for reference.

CCH/B

MBAS/r

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

My ref:

Your ref:

9 August 1985

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APM's
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[Handwritten signature]

Dear Colleague

FOOTBALL VIOLENCE AND SAFETY

In view of the general concern about the game of football and its problems, I am writing to all Members before the start of the new season to give information about the package of measures agreed between the Government and the football authorities.

These are the steps which the Government has taken, or has in hand:-

- the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol, etc) Act received Royal Assent on 25 July. The Home Secretary has also laid the order designating under the Act all Football League clubs, Wembley Stadium and other stadia used for international matches, and non-League grounds when they are used for matches with League clubs. The designation order came into effect on 9 August - the day before the FA Charity Shield match at Wembley between Everton and Manchester United;
- we have published the interim report of the Inquiry into safety and control at sports grounds under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Popplewell. The Inquiry has made a number of important recommendations for crowd control and "anti-hooliganism" measures;
- the Home Secretary has designated all qualifying grounds in Divisions 3 and 4 of the Football League under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act. (Divisions 1 and 2 clubs are already designated). The necessary order was laid on 19 July and came into force on 9 August. From that date the clubs concerned will be required to apply for safety certificates forthwith;
- action has been taken to enhance police effectiveness next season. The Association of Chief Police Officers has introduced a new system for exchanging information about the conduct of fans, which should assist in anticipating and preventing trouble. Three Home Office photographic vehicles will be available for deployment at football matches, together with 2 experimental high-definition cameras. The police role should be further strengthened by the proposed public order legislation to be introduced next Session;

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*With the Compliments of
the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State*

- the Home Secretary is drawing attention to the guidelines set down by the Court of Appeal on the sentencing of violent offenders and is thus encouraging magistrates to make full use of their powers to deal with football hooliganism;

- we have taken the initiative to agree binding measures with European governments. The Convention on spectator violence at sporting events was adopted by the Council of Europe on 23 July and will be opened for signature on 19 August. I enclose a summary of the Convention's key points. In addition, discussions have started with UEFA on the introduction of more binding requirements for matches held under their auspices;

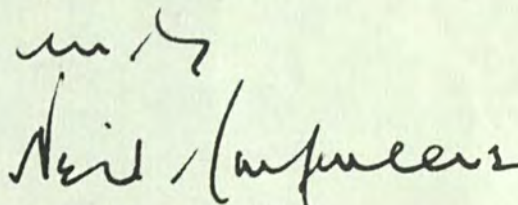
- discussions are being held with the Mexican Government on possible ways of controlling travel to the World Cup Finals in 1986.

The measures being taken by the football authorities and clubs include:-

- increased fines for disciplinary offences by players;
- banning known hooligans from grounds;
- revised Ground Regulations posted around stadia, including a clause making "police searches" a condition of entry;
- CCTV installed quickly at as many grounds as possible. The Football Trust has allocated special funds for the provision of CCTV equipment for the coming season. We should have 35 grounds covered within the next 2 months;
- more all-ticket and morning matches;
- identifying matches likely to have violence so that effective precautions can be taken.

Additional measures are still being considered. In particular, the Government is assisting the football authorities in the urgent development of a membership cards scheme.

The football authorities and the clubs recognise the importance of positive publicity to encourage fresh modes of behaviour in the new season. Various national and local schemes look likely to be developed. I hope that Members will give such initiatives every support and encouragement. We all share a concern to restore the good name of football, locally and nationally, and of course of our country abroad.


NEIL MACFARLANE

EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON SPECTATOR VIOLENCE AND MISBEHAVIOUR
AT SPORTS EVENTS AND IN PARTICULAR OF FOOTBALL MATCHES

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The Contracting Parties shall

- co-ordinate the policies and actions of Government Departments and other public agencies against spectator violence and misbehaviour (Article 2)
- secure that adequate public order resources are employed to counter outbreaks of violence and misbehaviour, near and inside grounds and along transit routes used by spectators; and facilitate co-operation and exchange of information between police forces of different localities (Article 3.1)
- seek to ensure that offenders (especially visiting supporters) are identified, prosecuted and that they receive appropriate penalties (Article 5 and 3.1(c))
- introduce procedures to identify problem matches in advance and for effective co-operation between authorities and clubs on precautions and measures to be taken (Article 4)
- encourage the co-ordination of travel arrangements to inhibit potential troublemakers from leaving to attend matches (Article 3.3)
- encourage the use of stewards in supporters clubs for crowd control and information (Article 3.2)
- press football and local authorities, stadium owners and clubs to take the necessary practical measures for problem matches, eg in the design, improvement and selection of stadia, segregation, alcohol control, ticket sales, the exclusion of drunks and troublemakers, etc (Article 3.4)
- encourage football authorities to review their regulations continuously (Article 6.3)
- looking further ahead, take social and education measures to promote the more positive side of sport, eg fair play and active participation (Article 3.5)
- establish a Standing Committee to police the operation of the Convention and propose improvements. (Article 8)

Scope

The Convention deals specifically with football, but there is provision for the Parties to extend it to other sports.

Ratification

For entry into force, three countries need to sign or ratify the Convention.