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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

21 July 1986

Dear Mr. Michip,

I am grateful to you and your colleagues from the Football League, the Football Trust, the Football Grounds Improvement Trust, the Professional Footballers' Association and the Sports Council for coming to see me again at Downing Street on 16 July to review progress on the various measures we have taken to improve crowd behaviour and safety at football grounds.

We agreed that good progress had been made. There were clear improvements in behaviour and atmosphere at matches last season. The alcohol controls and CCTV were effective, and I was particularly glad to note that CCTV should be in place in all but one First and Second Division grounds for the new season. The programme of safety improvements was well in hand. We were grateful for the funding and support of the two Trusts. We paid tribute to the efforts and cooperation of the Police and the clubs.

We also agreed, however, that there was no cause for complacency. Further vigorous efforts were needed, in partnership, to maintain and enhance the improvements achieved. Our Public Order Bill will come into effect during the coming season, with strengthened powers for the Police including exclusion orders. To enforce such orders the

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further spread of clubs' membership cards schemes was important. You stressed that such schemes could be of critical importance in your Association's use of its disciplinary powers.

Community involvement is important to the future of football and the professional clubs. The wider use of grounds, family areas and other community initiatives are being developed and have the Government's full support.

Finally, we looked ahead to the matches in Europe next season. The Mexico World Cup helped our reputation abroad and showed the value of careful preparation. We must plan thoroughly, together, for the forthcoming European matches of British teams, on the firm new base of the Convention and the tougher UEFA rules. These and the other issues we discussed will be taken forward in the Minister for Sport's Working Group, which is to meet again soon.

At our meeting we reaffirmed our joint determination - Government and football authorities - to combat and defeat violence in football. I am grateful for all that you and your colleagues have done; we must not let up now.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Philip Carter (Football League), Lord Aberdare (Football Trust), Mr. Tom Wharton (Football Grounds Improvement Trust), Mr. Brian Talbot (Professional Footballers' Association), and Mr. John Smith (Sports Council).

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

F.A. Millichip, Esq.