



From: [Redacted]
APS/Charles Clarke
Room 722, QAG
[Redacted]

cc: Home Secretary
[Redacted]

6 November 2000



**MEETING WITH ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON TIBET -
HANDLING OF THE CHINESE PRESIDENTS STATE VISIT**

You were present on 31 October when Mr Clarke met representatives of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet to discuss the police handling of the Chinese Presidents State Visit by the Metropolitan Police. Assistant Commissioner Ian Johnston from the Metropolitan Police and [Redacted] from Press Office were also present. This note provides a brief summary of the main concerns which the All Party Parliamentary Group raised.

2. Flags and Banners

The All Party Parliamentary Group raised concerns about whether flags and banners were only removed from protesters who were protesting against China, or whether flags and banners were also removed from other protestors. They understood that flags had been removed as a result of a local bye-law, but felt that it was unlikely that individual officers had been aware of this bye-law, and that they must therefore have been acting on the orders of senior officers.

3. Use of Vans to Control Demonstrators

The All Party Parliamentary Group were concerned at the way in which vans had been used by the police to block demonstrators, and felt that there had not been adequate justification for their use.

4. Contact between Government and Met Police

The All Party Parliamentary group raised concerns about whether the Home Office or Foreign Office had briefed the Met prior to the event. In particular whether the Met had been advised to remove demonstrators against the regime, and whether the Met had been briefed to recognise the Tibetan flag.

5. Mr Clarke explained that all State visits had a political sensitivity, but that equally it was important that the right to protest is upheld. Mr Clarke assured the group that the neither the Home Office or Foreign Office briefed the Met Police - but that the Met police would have been in contact with the Chinese Embassy and representatives of any known demonstrations to discuss how the event should be policed.

6. Assistant Commissioner Ian Johnston encouraged the group to look to the future, and to assess how the police and demonstrators can work together in the future to ensure that demonstrations are successfully policed. He explained that prior to the

event the Met Police had tried to contact the 35 groups who were planning demonstrations, but had failed to make contact with 21 of them. Assistant Commissioner Johnston suggested that in the future it would be helpful if the All Party Parliamentary Group could encourage the various groups to work with police to ensure that demonstrations were policed satisfactorily. He explained that the Met Police understood the depth of public feeling, and as a result had accepted the recommendations of the internal report which had been produced. Assistant Commissioner Johnston explained that he was pleased to have had the meeting, and that he would be delighted to continue dialogue with the All Party Parliamentary Group in the future.

