



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11.10.94

Rt. Hon. Michael Howard M.P.
Home Secretary
The Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1

10.10.1994

Dear Mr Howard,

you will be aware of the demonstration organised yesterday by the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill which was a large and peaceful march through central London culminating in a rally in Hyde Park.

I was invited to Chair the rally which was large and good humoured and ran from 2.50pm to 4.20pm when I closed it and the loudspeaker system was turned off prior to its being dismantled and removed from the Park. The march and rally were assisted by some two hundred stewards who undertook their duties with great diligence.

At the end of the rally as the crowd were leaving Hyde Park there were disturbances which continued for some time as the Police clashed with people who were either in or leaving Hyde Park.

Throughout the organising of the demonstration there were discussions and cooperation with the Police to ensure that the route was agreed and there was no trouble.

This cooperation broke down at the end of the rally when the Police officer in charge prevented coaches coming along Park Lane to collect people and thus exacerbated an already tense and overcrowded area at the edge of the Park. Despite the intervention of the Chief Steward the Police Officer remained emphatic he would not allow the buses through and the situation deteriorated. This was specially so when horses were used to clear the Park and thus force people towards the railings and roads around speakers corner.



two

The organising committee had and have no interest in anything but a peaceful rally against what we believe to be a piece of very unjust legislation. The Policing methods used turned the aftermath into something very different with wholly regrettable injuries suffered by both public and Police.

I am writing to you in your capacity of Police Authority for London to agree to the holding of an independent inquiry into these events. Such an inquiry should be chaired by a respected and independent person and should be able to take evidence from all concerned including those who attended the demonstration or were affected by it in the area around Marble Arch and Oxford Street.

This is of the utmost importance and I urge you to act on this with due haste.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Corbyn M.P.
Islington North

Red Rose Centre
129a Seven Sisters Road
London N7 7QG

071 263 9450
071 281 5720 fax

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

10 OCT 1994

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6



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

- 7 OCT 1994

Dear

**DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL:
SUNDAY, 9 OCTOBER 1994**

As you may know, there is to be a further demonstration in London on Sunday against the Criminal Justice Bill. As before, the event will be heavily policed, although there is a lower level of concern about the risks. We understand that the organisers are keen that it should be peaceful and the route is slightly shorter, and will not pass Downing Street.

... I attach lines to take in the event of disorder, as well as lines to take on the provisions of the Bill at which the demonstration is aimed.

Yours ever

10 Downing Street
London SW1

ANNEX

DRAFT LINES TO TAKE

- a. The control of marches in London is the responsibility of the Commissioner. The police deserve our full support for what was a difficult operation.

- b. (Should disorder occur)

The Government deplores the actions of a violent minority within the march

- c. (If there is an especially violent confrontation)

The criminal activity of those who confront the police in this way cannot be tolerated.

- d. (If, contrary to expectations, the police are overrun and there are injuries and serious damage to property)

The police face serious problems in dealing with this scale of criminal activity. I condemn it unreservedly.

- e. (If, as a result, there is significant criticism of police action)

Use line c. or d., plus - I have called for a report from the Commissioner.

DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER BILL

Lines to take

DEMONSTRATIONS

- This Bill is not an attack on freedom of speech, neither is it aimed at demonstrations of the type taking place today. [The proposals in the Bill are designed to protect the public and their property from trespassers who cause serious disruption or significant damage. Most demonstrations do not involve trespass.]

E.R.

From:

PS/David Maclean
Room 705

cc:

20 October 1994

**THE HOME SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH THE COMMISSIONER OF THE
METROPOLITAN POLICE: 19 OCTOBER**

The Home Secretary and Mr Maclean met Sir Paul Condon and the Operational Commander, Commander Rowe at New Scotland Yard yesterday evening for a de-briefing on the events which had taken place outside Parliament earlier in the day.

Commander Rowe reported that by 2 pm a group of protesters had joined the lobby queue but it soon became obvious that the same small group were intent on staying outside Parliament with the aim of causing a disturbance. Alcohol was being consumed and several scuffles broke out.

At 6 pm a meeting was held at Westminster Central Hall where there was a remarkably low turn-out and as a result stewards were sent across to persuade protesters in the lobby queue to bolster the size of the audience. The final audience was estimated to be approximately 2,300 with several hundred protesters outside. At 7.45 the fire alarm was activated - apparently by design, and this forced the protesters to leave, when they began to swamp Parliament Square. The stewards did their best to move the protesters away from the Palace of Westminster and the police set up filter cones along Millbank in an attempt to marshall the protesters onto the pavement. At this point, the crowd split into three groups - one group returned to the lobby queue, the second moved towards the ceremonial Tower Gates where at one point they began to rattle the gates. And the largest group of approximately 500 sat down in Millbank. As the latter group started to disperse across Lambeth bridge, missiles, cans, bottles, and fireworks were thrown at the police. Eventually 200 people were allowed to join the lobby.

Commander Rowe reported that there were up to 30 arrests, and the most serious assault was the attempted stabbing of a police officer. Six police officers were injured, one was hospitalised with an eye injury but had since been discharged.

Mr David Wheatley, a Welsh Nationalist, accompanied one or two Labour MPs, had slipped, fallen or been pushed by protesters as he attempted to move through a line of them. He sustained a serious back injury and was apparently detained in St Thomas' hospital. The Labour MPs would act as witnesses to what happened although it was not clear how the incident had occurred.

The Commissioner commented that the log recorded that there was early evidence of intent to disrupt the demonstration. The sector Commander had given a media briefing and a press conference would be held on Thursday.

The Home Secretary said that he was pleased to hear that no police officer had been seriously injured and thanked Commander Rowe and his officers for all their assistance.

Commander Rowe reported that there was no intelligence about whether the protesters would return on Thursday although it was clear that the same hardcore had taken part in the earlier demonstration at Hyde Park. The level of disorder could not however, be compared with that which had occurred on the earlier occasion.

29oct.jp

From:

F8 Division
273 3314
20 October 1994

cc

Simultaneously

**COALITION AGAINST THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER BILL:
DISORDER OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT ON WEDNESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 1994**

Issue

I understand that the Home Secretary and Mr MacLean had a meeting with Commander Rowe last evening to discuss the scenes of disorder outside Parliament. It may nevertheless be helpful to have on record the Metropolitan Police account of events.

Timing

2. No specific considerations.

Summary

3. At around 2 pm yesterday the first contingent of the protestors (about 200) had joined the lobby queue. We understand some were drinking excessively and that they were abusive towards the police.

4. At 6 pm it is estimated that somewhere in the region of 2,300

people gathered in Westminster Central Hall for a protest rally. A further 300 or so were in the street just outside the Hall.

4. Just before 8 pm, the fire alarm in the Hall was set off and those inside had to evacuate the building. As a result, the plans which had been made by the organisers for small groups of 50 or so to make their way to Parliament in an orderly fashion was defeated. Police contingency plans therefore came into play and those leaving the Hall were stewarded by the organisers/police along Great Peter Street, Marsham Street and towards Parliament via Millbank.

5. We are informed by Commander Rowe that of those present, about 500 were intent on causing trouble. It was while going along Millbank, that the police were on the receiving end of thrown cans, metal clips (which are used for holding barriers together) and fireworks.

6. On the way along Millbank the protestors split into three groups. One was intent in causing damage to buildings (breaking windows) and bus shelters. Another stopped opposite Chancellor's Gate and there was concern that some of them would attempt to make their way into the House. Officers in riot gear were deployed to disperse this element. The third group formed a sit-down protest in Millbank, but after being told, by means of a public address system, that they must either proceed to join the lobby queue or leave the area they abandoned their sit-down. We understand that between 70 and 100 of these proceeded to join the lobby queue.

7. All trouble had ceased by 11 pm by which time there were relatively few still outside Parliament.

8. There were 35 arrests, mostly for drunkenness and public order offences. 5 officers were injured though none seriously so. There were 11 civilian injuries though again none were serious. The most notable of these was to Dafydd Wigley MP who was injured while caught between police officers during the disorder. We understand that Mr Wigley has spoken to the

Speaker's Office about this, but he apparently has no complaint against the police.

Handling

9. There are no special handling issues. No 10 has already been provided with lines to take for this afternoon's Prime Minister's Question Time. Commander Rowe has also provided Speaker's Office (as requested by the Home Secretary) with a verbal account of the police operation.

F8 Division.