

BF 15/11

Sp b/c. Mr Andrew Phillips Pilling (16)



PO Box 500  
London SW1P 1XH

Telephone [Redacted]

Ref: POLF50-6-50-13/DG

5 May 1983

PERMANENT UNDER  
RECEIVED  
- 6 MAY 1983  
SECRETARY OF STATE

Dear Brian,

*Handwritten signatures and initials*  
975

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF SPECIAL BRANCHES

Thank you for your letter of 28 April about the role of Special Branches.

2. I fully agree that the Home Office should coordinate a review of the existing terms of reference of Special Branches and be responsible for issuing any revised version that may result.
3. At the kind of discussion you have in mind, my representative will be [Redacted] **SyS Officer** [Redacted] assisted as necessary by [Redacted] **SyS Officer** [Redacted], head of my Secretariat.
4. On a matter of detail, I am not sure from your reference to the possible need for more useful guidance on subversion in industrial disputes whether you consider that our letter of 29 May 1974, which was issued to Chief Constables with Home Office agreement, is no longer adequate. In my view this guidance has stood the test of time well and we still draw upon it in briefing newly appointed Chief Constables.
5. In general, I would see much advantage in the preparation of a brief, up-to-date guidance to Chief Constables about the functions of Special Branches and their relations with the Security Service. The difficulty remains however that in the consultation about such guidance and in its eventual promulgation there is a risk of fuelling public debate and local authority concern about our work in the politically delicate area of subversion. I hope that this risk will be fully taken into account at the preliminary discussion to be chaired by Joe Pilling.

*Handwritten notes:*  
now fixed  
15 October  
has been  
made secret  
they already  
now fixed  
Thurs 3 Nov PM  
I think with  
send us note  
of reply.

*Handwritten:* Yours ever,  
[Redacted]  
**SyS Officer**

Sir Brian Cubbon KCB  
HOME OFFICE

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