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cc. Mr. McCaffrey

RECORD OF A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE HOME SECRETARY AT 15.40 ON WEDNESDAY 25 APRIL

The Prime Minister spoke from the Albany Hotel, Birmingham to Mr. Rees who was in the Labour Party Committee Rooms in Lewisham.

The Prime Minister asked what progress Mr. Rees had made in his discussions with the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Mr. Rees said that he had held a press conference, after discussions with Mr. McCaffrey at No. 10. The press conference had covered:

1. The inquiry into the death following the Southall disturbances.
2. The press notice about how the police complaints procedure operated.
3. An explanation of the working of section 8 of the Police Act 1976 which provided for independent review by the Police Complaints Board: if, as a result of investigating the complaints, the Board concluded that an overall problem emerged, they could put a report on this to the Home Secretary.

The Prime Minister asked what the next steps would be. The Home Secretary said that the investigation should now be left to proceed, having been initiated. He expected to receive a detailed report from the Commissioner as soon as possible. In addition, there should be some work on the point which the Prime Minister had made at the previous day's press conference, referring to the need to consider whether the law about marches might need to be made applicable to meetings in certain circumstances.

The Prime Minister said that the Southall incident had been the top story yet again on the BBC 1.00 news. It was important to get this out of the headlines. Mr. Rees hoped that his press conference, which took place at 12.50 had contributed to achieving this. The Prime Minister felt that the fewer press conferences

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on the subject the better for the present. He asked how soon a report on the death would be available. The Home Secretary said that this would be available as soon as possible. The post mortem had now been completed and a criminal investigation was under way.

The Prime Minister asked that the Home Secretary's office should provide him with a note on the situation, on which he could draw in the event of further questions, in addition to the text of the Home Secretary's press conference which had already been passed to No. 10.

The Prime Minister then went on to discuss the election campaign with the Home Secretary.

MA

25 April 1979