

LOOSE MINUTE

Copied to File Reference Number,
Legal Adviser and Officer

1. I refer to my Loose Minute of 4 May 1979 to which I attached a copy of the "Rochdale Alternative Press" newspaper. This relates to allegations of indecency against Mr Cyril SMITH, Liberal MP for Rochdale, and the criminal investigation procedures adopted in the case. Whilst attending the Regional ACPO Conference at Chester on 22 June the Chief Constable of Lancashire, Mr B Laucharne, had a word with me. He said that he was concerned that the DPP had denied receiving a copy of the report which dealt with the Police investigations into this allegation against Mr SMITH some years ago. In fact, the Police had sent a copy to the DPP and although the Lancashire Police were steadfastly adopting a line of "no comment" if the pressure increased it might be necessary to seek the assistance of the DPP to acknowledge that a copy had been sent to him. Mr Laucharne pointed out that there was a danger of critics of the Lancashire Police drawing the conclusion that the report had not been sent to the DPP as part of a conspiracy to assist Mr SMITH and this was particularly sensitive in view of the fact that his predecessor had been dismissed partly because of allegations of improper exercise of prosecution discretion.

2. Mr Laucharne asked that he be informed of any significant developments which occur in this case that we hear of but he stressed that he would appreciate being informed personally. He has some suspicions that leakage of information has occurred by a previous member of the Lancashire Police Force who has a number of close friends still serving, some of them of high rank.

3. I suggest that I act as the contact of communication to Mr Laucharne under ordinary circumstances. For the record, if Mr Laucharne is not available the only other person to be consulted about this case is his Deputy Mr John Moody.

Name and Officer details

3 July 1979

Officer Note: "Legal Adviser will handle this with the author".

Dated 04 July 1979