

## Briefing Note

14 December, 1993

Meeting on 13 December 199~~4~~<sup>3</sup> with Princess of Wales at Kensington Palace, 11.20am.

Arrived ten minutes early but was shown straight in. Contrary to previous indication Patrick Jephson was not present. Princess of Wales came straight to the point by stating she wanted the immediate removal of her [REDACTED] protection officers. She stated that the basis of her request was that with effect from the 22 December (and until that time the two Princes were staying with her and therefore in receipt of full protection) she had completed her public engagements and was thereafter retreating into a much lower profile way of life. She stated that she had already discussed the issue with HM The Queen and Sir Robert Fellowes and they had been of the view that if she felt she could cope without protection then so be it.

(I telephoned Sir Robert Fellowes at 12.10pm and put this to him. He stated that whilst she may have broadly reflected HM The Queen's view he had resisted it and had said that any such removal should be on a gradual basis so that everyone could be satisfied it was going to work satisfactorily. He asked that this contrary view be noted on my Branch Note.!)

The Princess was obviously very determined that there should be no interference with her plans although she stated that she regretted having to dispossess the [REDACTED] protection officers of their roles immediately before Christmas. I pointed out to her that the fact that she was going to adopt a more low profile role did not mean that media and public interest in her would diminish and indeed pointed out the example where the Duchess of York was physically mobbed on leaving a theatre fairly recently. Her response to this was that she could cope adequately with such situations if and when they arose and went on to state her belief that once the media were aware that her protection had been withdrawn that they would respect her privacy. I suggested to her that such an outcome was unlikely and went on to point out that in addition to the media and the public generally, we have on record the details of some 3,000 individuals who have various fixations about members of the Royal Family who would not be put off by the removal of protection and given all the circumstances I could not see how it would be possible to totally withdraw the protection.