

29th May, 1940

SECRET MEMORANDUMPROTECTION OF POLICE PERSONNEL AND POLICE
BUILDINGS
ISSUE AND USE OF FIREARMSReference Confidential Memo. No. 20/40

In connection with the arming of police engaged on certain duties, the Secretary of State has considered the question in the light of the existing situation and in particular of the possibility of parachute landings.

The following is an extract of a letter which has been received from the Home Office on this subject, and it is reproduced for the general guidance of Senior Officers who may at any time be called upon to issue instructions:-

"It must be borne in mind that the police are not a combatant force, and that, even in the existing situation, the main body of the police must remain available for the performance of normal police duties, for which the carrying of arms may be unnecessary or even undesirable; and that in the case of enemy landings by parachute the functions of the police would in the main be confined to observing and reporting their presence to the Military Authorities and preventing attempts at sabotage or other acts of violence by isolated individuals and overpowering and arresting the individuals where possible. Subject to the observance of this fundamental principle there are, however, certain purposes for which it would, in the existing circumstances, be proper and desirable for the police, whether regular or auxiliary personnel, to carry arms, namely:-

- (a) Guarding vulnerable points against sabotage, so far as this is undertaken by the police.
- (b) Protecting important police stations against attempts to seize them by enemy raiding parties, whether parachutists or not. For this purpose, selected members of the staffs of the stations should be armed.
- (c) Armed motor patrols employed in parties of from two to four men, especially in rural districts

To enable the conditions envisaged above to be met, the number of pistols in Divisions will be increased. In addition a supply of rifles and ammunition will be issued to all Divisions as soon as they are available.

The details of these arrangements will be dealt with by way of a separate memorandum.

PHILIP GAME

Commissioner

D.A.Cs. 1 - 4,
Supts. CO to TA,
Ch. Insp. and S.D. Insp.
Copies:- Commissioner
D/Commissioner
Asst. Commissioners
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