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This is a copy. The original has been
extracted and retained
under Section 3(4).

SECRET

Prime Minister.

No date has been set for this
programme yet but it is unlikely
to be broadcast for some months.
Contract to proceed as proposed?

Ref. A04726

PRIME MINISTER

Panorama Programme on the KGB

KH
15.4.

The Editor of Panorama has told the Head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office News Department that Panorama is considering the possibility of producing a programme on the KGB and would welcome any help that Government Departments may be able to offer.

2. This has been discussed among the Departments and Agencies concerned. It is arguable that, having refused to provide Panorama with any assistance on our own intelligence services, we should refuse to provide help on the KGB. On balance, however, officials have concluded that it would be better to offer the Panorama team limited assistance rather than flatly refuse to help in any way.

3. The proposal is that the Agencies should not be directly involved at all. The Head of the News Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will give the BBC the names of certain academics and outside authors to whom Panorama might turn; they will also offer to let the Panorama team have some Press cuttings of KGB activities in recent years.

Paragraph 4 deleted and retained
under Section 3(4).

CM Wayland
9 August 2011

5. Whether or not any official help is given to the programme the Russians will conclude that Her Majesty's Government are behind it. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office are prepared to live with that risk.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to the Home Secretary and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

14 April 1981

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