

Sent to Inlan  
17/8.

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MR PONTING

THE DPP, AFTER CONSULTING THE LAW OFFICERS, HAS DECIDED THAT MR PONTING, THE MOD ASSISTANT SECRETARY WHO PASSED DOCUMENTS TO TAM DALYELL, SHOULD BE CHARGED. THIS DECISION WILL BE ANNOUNCED EITHER TONIGHT OR TOMORROW MORNING.

THE PROSECUTION WILL BE FOR OFFENCES UNDER SECTION 2 OF THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT. MR PONTING WILL REMAIN SUSPENDED FROM DUTY WITHOUT PAY UNTIL THE VERDICT IS GIVEN.

FROM DAVID BARCLAY  
17 AUGUST 1984

Suspended without pay  
before a decision

PONTING PROSECUTION CHRONOLOGY

16 July

Ponting sent documents to Tam Dalyell

26 July

MOD documents returned to Mr Heseltine, decision to undertake investigation into the leak.

Friday 10 August, 6 pm

Admission by Ponting that he had sent documents to Dalyell.

Monday 13 August, 11 am

Sir Ewen Broadbent reports to DPP. DPP consults Solicitor General and asks for early police report. At lunchtime Sir Ewen Broadbent phoned by Solicitor General about the case. Afternoon, Michael Heseltine informed of reference to DPP by Sir Ewen Broadbent. PM informed by telex.

Tuesday 14 August

Ponting sees Mr Hastie-Smith and handed letter about the possibility of prosecution.

15 August

John Stanley informed of reference to DPP.

16 August

Police report received by DPP.

17 August

- Solicitor General and DPP considered police report and consulted the AG by phone. The AG agreed that there should be a prosecution.

18 August

Subsequently

- Ponting appeared before Bow Street Court  
- Defence Ministers informed, PM informed by telex.