

Prime Minister
Content with their
proposed action?

Ref. A085/1721

MR ~~BUTLER~~

FRB

25.6

Yes not

The Prime Minister will remember that there was reason to believe that much of the material on which Chapman Pincher based his two books about Russian penetration of the security and intelligence services, and in particular about the late Sir Roger Hollis, was derived from material supplied to him by Mr Peter Wright, a disaffected former member of the Security Service now living in retirement in Australia.

2. The Prime Minister will also remember that last summer Mr Wright sent a dossier to Sir Anthony Kershaw, who in turn passed it on to me. Both Mr Pincher's book and the Wright dossier were very thoroughly examined, but there was no new information of any significance, and both the books and the dossier contained a considerable number of false deductions and wrongly recollected "facts".

3. We know that Mr Wright (like Mr Pincher) has been disappointed by the relative failure of his attempts to get public recognition of his views on the Hollis affair and Government action accordingly. Recent press reports make it clear that Mr Peter Wright is now intending to publish a volume of memoirs. It is likely that this will not be confined to the Hollis affair and investigation, but cover the whole of Mr Wright's time with the Security Service. Its publication would be a clear breach of Mr Wright's duty of confidentiality, as well as of the Official Secrets Acts. It could well contain a considerable amount of information, the publication of which would be embarrassing if not damaging to national security.

4. There is reason to believe that Mr Wright has entered into arrangements with a co-author - Mr Paul Greengrass, the Editor of the World in Action programme - and with the publishers William Heinemann Limited. In order to frustrate any attempt by the British authorities to prevent publication by legal means, those concerned are planning to publish the book in the first instance in Australia, and then to bring copies to a warehouse in the Netherlands, from which it will be distributed in this country.

5. I have discussed this matter with the Director General of the Security Service and the Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, and also with the Treasury Solicitor and the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers. We all consider that the Government should endeavour to prevent Mr Wright and his associates from publishing this book. Counsel's opinion has been taken, and Counsel is clearly of the view that we should stand a very good chance of obtaining an injunction against Mr Wright's co-author, literary agent and publisher in this country. Preparations are being made to apply for an interlocutory injunction accordingly.

6. Counsel advises that, though we should in any case stand a good chance in the English courts, our chances would be improved if we were also to take proceedings against Mr Wright and his Australian publisher in the Australian courts. We are therefore taking steps to obtain the advice of Australian counsel both as to the possibility of taking such proceedings and as to the likelihood of success in them.

7. Once we have the advice of Australian counsel, it is proposed to proceed to apply for injunctions. The intention will be so far as possible to proceed simultaneously in this country and in Australia, so as to foreclose on any attempt by Mr Wright or his publishers to defeat our objectives by accelerating publication in Australia.

8. I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Home Secretary and to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers.

R

Approved by
ROBERT ARMSTRONG
and signed in his absence.

25 June 1985



DCS
④

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Thank you for your minute of 25 June (A085/1721) about the book which Mr. Peter Wright is now believed to be preparing. The Prime Minister is content with the proposed action outlined in your minute.

I am copying this minute to Mr. Appleyard (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Mr. Taylor (Home Office) and Mr. Steel (Law Officers' Department).

(F.E.R. BUTLER)

26 June 1985

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

ECL