



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 September 1986

*Dear Mr. Dalyell*

Thank you for your letter of 17 August.

The Attorney General has applied in the New South Wales Court for an injunction to prevent publication of a book by Mr. Peter Wright. Affidavits in this matter have, at the Attorney General's request, been sworn by Sir Robert Armstrong. When the application comes before the New South Wales Court for decision, Sir Robert will be required to testify in person to his affidavits. I am advised that he is unlikely to be required by the court for very long.

As to the extension of his appointment, I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave to your Question on 1 July (Official Record, column 451).

*Yours sincerely*  
*Rajawshah*

Tam Dalyell, Esq., M.P.

*OA*

*BM  
cc MA  
CO*

*File  
CK?*



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As to the extension of his appointment, I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave to your Question on 1 July (Official Record, column 451).

Tam Dalyell, Esq., M.P.

Ref. A086/2392

MR ADDISON

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Mr Flesher's minute of 20 August to Mr Cloke asked for a draft reply to Mr Dalyell's letter of 17 August to the Prime Minister.

--- 2. I attach a draft.

*ms*

M C STARK

2 September 1986

GR

GR

1. ~~GR~~ - to see

2. GR - to type

71 BM.

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO  
TAM DALYELL ESQ MP, HOUSE OF COMMONS

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As to the extension of his appointment, I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave to your Question on 1 July (Official Record, column 451).

Tam DALYELL MP  
3/9



EC

Ack 20/8.

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

MR. CLOKE  
CABINET OFFICE

I enclose a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from Tam Dalyell, M.P.

I should be grateful if you could provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to Mr. Dalyell, to reach me by Wednesday 3 September please.

TIM FLESHER  
20 August 1986



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

cc DA

17/8/86

17/8

if  
it would be better  
to have a  
written statement  
of the facts  
of the case

Dear Prime Minister,

As you know, I have asked you a number of Parliamentary Questions about Sir Robert Armstrong's position in relation to Westlands, the reasons for your bringing him back from Honolulu, where he was having important economic discussions, and the reasons for your decision to extend his term of office past the normal retiring age.

It is now widely reported in the press that Sir Robert will be required this autumn in a New South Wales Court. The hearings may last only a fortnight. But it seems more than possible that the hearings will drag on, and on, and on.

How can a Cabinet Secretary - let alone one who combines his role with that of Head of the Home Civil Service - be expected to be "down-under" for a substantial part of the autumn? Besides, if he is to be a major witness, will not enormous preparation be required?



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

I have just re-read the Report of the Select Committee on Westland.

To put it in the mildest terms, is it not highly desirable that the Cabinet Secretary be in the country, when Parliament has a full-scale Debate in the autumn?

Or, is it your intention to whisk Sir Robert back at short notice - Court Proceedings permitting, I suppose - as you did from Honolulu?

You have made public reference to my being the late Dick Crossman's PPS.

So, may I say from experience of the 1960s, from a privileged spectator role

at the centre of Government, that I doubt whether it is proper to assign so many

tasks to one key individual, albeit from observation of his appearance before

the Select Committee on Westlands, the best stone-wall batsman there is of

hostile political bowling.

Maybe the correct course would be for Sir Robert to give way to another person as

Cabinet Secretary, and to spend the extra time you have given to him,

concentrating on Wright and protecting your personal position on Westlands?

Yours sincerely  
Ian Dampell