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file B17

mtg. record.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

PETER WRIGHT CASE

The Prime Minister discussed your minute of 3 October with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Attorney General and yourself.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Government should continue to use its existing arguments to fight this case, namely those of breach of confidence and breach of contract. These were broad and well founded principles, especially since a member of the Security Service was involved. In the event of the Government receiving an unsatisfactory decision from the lower court, Ministers should reflect on the Government's tactics in the case, including some of the points referred to in your minute, when formulating the appeal to the higher court. The Government should be ready to carry the appeal to the highest court in Australia.

It was also agreed that there should be an urgent examination and comparison of the current instructions of guidance given to MI5 and MI6. Guidance for MI6 ought to be put on an analogous basis to that given to MI5. It was also necessary to see how this guidance had changed and developed over the years, including the years covered by Mr. Wright's memoirs. There should be an examination of the arrangements in other countries, particularly in the USA regarding the CIA, for controlling and authorising activities of the relevant security agencies

NLW agreed with Home Office that Cabinet office will provide names 7/10

Finally, the Home Office should, in consultation with others concerned, identify, on a contingency basis, possible candidates for any inquiry of the sort described in paragraph 10 of your minute.

BF 11

The Prime Minister and the other Ministers concerned should continue to be kept in close touch with all developments on this case. They should also have early advice on the more general issues referred to in the third paragraph above.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Home Secretary and the Attorney General.

N. L. W.

N.L. WICKS
6 October 1986

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