



Prime Minister

To see

[Handwritten signature]

16x1

Ref. A0688

MR. WHITMORE

Professor Anthony Blunt

I have spoken to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers.

2. He thought that the Attorney General would be content to add to his proposed Answer a sentence to the effect:

See X/ ✓
of the attached
letter.

"If anyone is in possession of such information, I hope that he will make it available to the Director of Public Prosecutions so that it may be fully investigated".

3. I said that the Prime Minister thought that it would be advantageous for someone to write specifically to Mr. Andrew Boyle, inviting him to make the information which he had obtained in the course of his enquiries available, so that it could be the subject of proper investigation. It was clearly wrong on the one hand for the Attorney General to ask for such information; it would equally be undesirable for the security authorities to do so direct. It seemed to me that the appropriate person to make this request would be the Director of Public Prosecutions. Mr. Beckett undertook to put this to the Attorney General.

4. I said that there was reason to think that I might receive an approach from Professor Blunt's legal adviser for an interview, the purpose of which would be for him to satisfy himself, and his client, that a statement which he proposed to issue would not be prejudicial to national security. I said that I should be grateful for advice as to how I should respond to such a request, given that the fact of the request, and of the interview, might subsequently become public. Mr. Beckett said that he would consult the Attorney General, but that his view was that, if such a request were made and it was clear that the purpose was solely to satisfy Professor Blunt and his legal adviser that there was nothing in the statement prejudicial to national security, it would be a proper request to be made and it would be appropriate for me to accede to it. Mr. Beckett offered to be present, if such an interview took place.

5. Finally, Mr. Beckett said that it was not possible, as a matter of procedure, for the Attorney General to answer Mr. Cryer's Question about Dr. Mann until Monday, 19th November. It was for question whether the Attorney General should make a statement on the lines of the proposed Answer before the weekend. I said that the Prime Minister's Press Secretary had made it clear (unattributably) that we did not believe ~~*****~~ to be the Fifth Man, and this had now appeared in the newspapers. In the circumstances, we agreed that the Attorney General should issue no statement before the weekend, and that he should answer Mr. Cryer's Question on Monday, with the additional sentence on the lines proposed.

REA

(Robert Armstrong)

NB. Paras. 2 and 3 were overtaken by later events.

16th November, 1979

nm Name redacted and retained
under Section 3(4)

S. Gray
22/1/2016

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OS 7641 Ext. 3291

Communications on this subject should
be addressed to
THE LEGAL SECRETARY
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS,
LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT,
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,
LONDON, W.C.2.

16 November 1979

Clive Whitmore Esq
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON S W 1

Dear Clive,

Martin Vile raised with me this morning the matter of the Attorney General answering today Bob Cryer's Question about referring the conduct of Dr Mann to the DPP. That question is down today in the Notice of Questions for answer on Monday and Murdo MacLean, in the Chief Whip's Office, tells me that, after seeking advice from the House Authorities, it is not possible as a matter of procedure for the Attorney to answer that question today.

There is nothing, however, to prevent the Attorney General issuing a statement and in view of the speculation about Dr Mann, if it is thought that this matter should be got out of the way before the weekend the Attorney could today issue a statement on the lines of the attached draft. Alternatively, the matter could be left until Monday when the Attorney would answer Mr Cryer's question as follows:-

X: |

"No. I have no information relating to the conduct of Dr Wilfred Mann which would justify my making any such reference to the Director of Public Prosecutions."

I am copying this letter to Martin Vile.

Not.

After discussion with
Sir Robert Gammage it was
decided not to issue a
statement today. Our position
on the Fifth Mann and Dr
Mann has been made
clear in press briefing.

JW

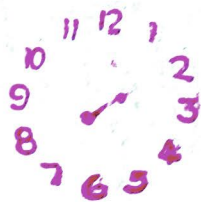
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Yours sincerely
Bill Beckett

W C BECKETT

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DRAFT

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TODAY

In view of widespread speculation the Attorney General considers it right that it should be known that no information has been brought to his attention which would justify any reference to the Director of Public Prosecutions concerning the conduct of Dr Wilfred Mann.

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