

cc PC  
cc Blair

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

B.07621

MR WICKS

Lord Rothschild

As arranged with Sir Robert Armstrong and yourself, I visited Lord Rothschild at N M Rothschild & Sons at 4 p.m. today. The call lasted twenty minutes. Lord Rothschild was relaxed and friendly.

2. He began by saying that you had obviously wanted, in your recent telephone conversation with him, to remind him of some discussions he had had with the Prime Minister about security. I said that Lord Rothschild had met the Prime Minister at the end of May and early in July 1979 to discuss means of countering subversion, and had written a minute to the Prime Minister dated 13 June 1979 on the same subject. Lord Rothschild said that he could well remember his talks about counter subversion with the then Cabinet Secretary but had no recollection of any meeting on the subject with the Prime Minister. He said that he would of course be careful, now that he had been reminded of those meetings, to make no public statements to the effect that he had never discussed security matters with the Prime Minister.

3. Lord Rothschild then said that he had no idea how the Attorney General would pursue his consideration of another matter concerning himself. It was possible that the police would come and interview him at any time. He would tell the police that he had discussed security matters with the Prime Minister, though he could not remember when, and that he could not divulge the subject because that would contravene the Official Secrets Act. I repeated the dates of the Prime Minister's meetings with Lord Rothschild and said that, although I of course was speaking without prejudice to the Attorney General's consideration of matters concerning Lord Rothschild, I could imagine that the police would ask questions only about any matters they were actually investigating. Lord Rothschild said that he had no wish to embarrass the Government and therefore could not reveal his

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his discussions with the Prime Minister about counter subversion; that could lead to dramatic stories about microphones in Mr Kinnock's office or his home. Lord Rothschild said that, when the media had stopped tailing him everywhere, he might wish to visit the Cabinet Office to see a copy of the minute he wrote to the Prime Minister on 13 June 1979, to learn who else had been at his meetings with the Prime Minister and to learn whether those meetings had been "rough" in tone. He would be grateful also to see the records of those meetings - if that were allowed. He understood, however, that your predecessor had been absent from one of them, so that there was no record. (I understood this to be a reference to a telephone conversation with you, rather than an admission that after all Lord Rothschild remembered the meetings of 1979.)

4. Expanding his wish to help the Government whenever he could, Lord Rothschild said that some of his efforts had been more successful than others. One in particular had been more successful six years ago than now. I took this to be a reference - and it was the only one - to Lord Rothschild's role in bringing Mr Wright to this country in 1980.

5. Lord Rothschild did not express any view on the Prime Minister's reaction to his letter to the Daily Telegraph. But he twice referred to "the Prime Minister's second statement", obviously seeking to give equal status to the Prime Minister's remark about clearance as to the actual statement of last Friday.

6. Several times during the interview, Lord Rothschild apologised for the presence of the press at the door when I had arrived. When I said that I had checked that no press representatives were present, he denied this, but eventually had the point checked. My version was confirmed. He had the point checked again before I left, and there still were no press representatives at the door. I wondered whether Lord Rothschild had hoped to give the impression that the media would inevitably learn of my visit, should he wish for his own reasons to disclose it.

No; but I  
can explain  
the source

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7. I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretary to the Home Secretary, to Sir Robert Armstrong, and to Michael Saunders in the Law Officers' Department.

*(Mallaby)*

C L G Mallaby

8 December 1986

PRIME MINISTER

I have not confirmed to Lord Rothschild that I will accept his invitation to a "very quick sandwich lunch in New Court" on Monday. I am very ready to see him. But if you have hesitations I suggest the following. Robin Butler might see him. This would have the advantage that:

1. it would distance your office: and
2. there would be no risk of getting drawn into discussion about Lord Rothschild's part in the Pinscher book, or in the nuances of your statement, because Robin does not know anything about all that.

I have checked with Robin that he is ready to go. I could brief him on your meetings with Lord Rothschild in 1979. No problem there because he would have had access to the files when he was here.

What do you think?

*Yes no must better*

*Agreed with PR: Nalleby to go.*

*N.L.W.*

Prime Minister

*N.L.W.  
8.12*

NIGEL WICKS

*R.T.A. has had*

5 December 1986

*Some contact will have*

VSCADG

*R over the weekend (what I can tell you about). As a result R.T.A. wishes Mr Nalleby to see her R today. It would be convenient for Mr Nalleby (not Mr Butler) to do the chore above. Agree*

*N.L.W.  
8.12*

*F. Wright file* AS dictated by Lord Rothschild's  
Secretary to my secretary.

Mr Wicks,

We spoke on the telephone yesterday but I was a long way away and the connection was very bad indeed. I thought I detected a certain note in your voice and would therefore like to have a talk with you. It would not be a good thing for me to come to No 10 nor to the Cabinet Office, front or back entrances, nor my flat in London as I am being hounded by the Press and followed by motor cyclists.

I therefore suggest that on Monday, we could have a very quick sandwich lunch in New Court, St Swithins Lane which is safe because there are so many people constantly coming in and going out, and we could talk in my room which is swept.

It takes about seven minutes from No 10 to St Swithins Lane - I have done it often - and whatever time suits you will suit me provided it is not early in the morning.

(Signed) ROTHSCHILD

Secretary's tel. no: = 280 5320

*Sir Brian Cribben*  
*cc Sir Anthony Duff*  
*C. L. G. Malley C.M.G.*  
*T. Woolley.*

*I should be glad for an urgent word about this.*

*N. C. D.*

*17.12*

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