

SECRET

Sec. Security: Hambleton: June 80 JGc BI

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LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE
LONDON, WC2A 2LL

J. Nursaw CB
LEGAL SECRETARY.

24 November 1982

F E R Butler Esq
Principal Private Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON S W 1

Dear Robin,

R v HAMBLETON
R v RITCHIE

You may be pressed for a statement immediately on Miss Ritchie, before the trial of Hambleton is concluded.

FERB

24.11.

On Monday 29 November it is anticipated that Miss Ritchie will plead guilty at the Central Criminal Court before the Lord Chief Justice to an offence under section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. Thereafter the Court will try Professor Hambleton who is accused of offences under section 1. Estimates of the length of that trial vary from five working days to three weeks.

I am writing to you because it is inevitable that there will be pressure for a Government statement immediately the trials are ended and in the case of Hambleton (whose spying related to his work in NATO) there is no Department able to answer questions about security aspects of the case. Since the Prime Minister will be under pressure to give details of the cases and to say whether they raise issues which will be referred to the Security Commission, you will wish to begin coordinating the preparation of briefing material. All that I could do would be to provide information about the prosecution evidence and the trials.

I will ask Sir Robert Armstrong's office to do so.

There is one aspect of the case against Hambleton which I must bring to your attention immediately. In a very long confession to the Police he describes his years as a spy in some detail. One of the stories he tells is how the then Head of the KGB came to dinner at his apartment in Moscow and how he asked Hambleton to try to become a member of the Canadian Parliament, offering to finance his campaign. In view of the subsequent elevation of that official, the Attorney thinks that the Prime Minister should be informed that this evidence will undoubtedly come out at the trial. The Attorney thinks it would be quite wrong to take any steps to attempt to conceal it but

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W. J. Nursaw CB
LEGAL SECRETARY.

as we have no idea whether it is a true story, he proposes to mention it in his opening speech with the comment that the Crown are unable to say whether it is true.

I enclose a copy of the relevant extract from the record of the Police interview with Hambleton.

I am copying this letter, together with the enclosure, to Brian Fall (FCO) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and without the enclosure to John Halliday (HO), David Omand (MOD) and Bernard Sheldon.

*Yours sincerely,
Jim Nursaw*

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SECURITY

Miss Ritchie

March 82

This is for the



A-L's
decision. We
can't interfere
in any
way
not

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

I think that you will want to see this immediately.

The Russians, not understanding British justice, will no doubt believe that we have organised that the story about Andropov should come out now, as an unfriendly act.

I will explore tomorrow whether it really is inevitable that this story should come out in the evidence. If it is inevitable, there is no point in seeking FCO advice. But if it could be avoided the FCO may want to comment.

FERB 24.11.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

You will have seen Jim Nursaw's letter of 24 November to me about the cases against Miss Ritchie and Professor Hambleton.

May I look to you for advice on the action which the Prime Minister will need to take when these cases are out of the way. I imagine that there will be pressure for her to make a statement on them. It would obviously be preferable for her to make one statement rather than two. But I suppose that there may be pressure for a statement on the case of Miss Ritchie immediately it is disposed of, which would be as early as Tuesday. Nevertheless, if you think it a sustainable line for the Prime Minister to say that she will make a statement on both cases together when Professor Hambleton's case has been disposed of, this would obviously be more convenient.

R.R.B.

25 November 1982

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FCO
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SS
MOD

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

25 November 1982

Dear Jim,

Thank you for your letter of 24 November about the cases against Miss Ritchie and Professor Hambleton. I am following up with Sir Robert Armstrong's office the preparation of briefing for the Prime Minister on statements when the cases are out of the way.

I have shown your letter to the Prime Minister, who has noted the contents of the part of Professor Hambleton's confession which was attached to your letter.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Butler

J Nursaw Esq.,
Law Officers' Department.

p.s. Thank you also for your postscript of today.

ATA

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cc. Security: Hambleton - June 82

5



J. Nursaw
LEGAL SECRETARY.

LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE
LONDON, WC2A 2LL

25 November 1982

F E R Butler Esq
Principal Private Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON S W 1

Dear Robin,

R v HAMBLETON
R v RITCHIE

You already have this
A postscript to my letter of yesterday.

At a conference yesterday with the DPP's staff, Treasury Counsel and Bernard Sheldon, the Attorney General discussed the handling at the trial of Hambleton of the Andropov story. It was agreed that for the Attorney to comment that the Crown is unable to say whether the story is true would be inconsistent with the Crown relying upon the confession as a whole as a truthful account of Hambleton's offences. We have no reason to doubt any other part of the confession. In the circumstances, the most that the Attorney General can do is to introduce the story with some such words as "The Defendant says that.....".

I am giving this letter the same circulation as yesterday's.

*Yours sincerely,
J. Nursaw*

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WLS Dr. Whitmore - to see
Sir
then p.a. 3

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A.J.C. ^{18.}/₃

cc PS ✓
PS/Mr. Hurd —
PS/PUS —
Mr. Wright
Mr. Moberly
Chief Clerk
Dep Chief Clerk
Hd/Security Dept.
Hd/POD
Hd /NENAD
Mr. Freeland, Legal Adviser
Hd/News Dept.
Sir R. Armstrong, Cabinet Office
— Mr. J. Coles, PS, No. 10

SECRET

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RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

TO BE SENT

H/Tel Aviv Please pass following message to Charge d'Affaires as soon as possible. H/Cairo pass to Ambassador as soon as possible.

Strictly Personal for Charge d'Affaires Tel Aviv/
Ambassador Cairo

MISS RHONA RITCHIE

1. Miss Ritchie has admitted in statements to the Security Service and Police that she has passed transcripts of several classified telegrams to the Egyptian First Secretary, Ansari. For your information these telegrams relate mainly to the discussions leading up to the establishment of the Sinai Force, but also included Tel Aviv telegram to MODUK (unnumbered) dated 9 February about the possible mobilisation of Israeli forces. Miss Ritchie will appear in court at 3.15 London time (TODAY (18 MARCH)) charged with an offence under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act.

2. You should arrange to speak as close to 3.15 as possible to the MFA, to the Director General himself if he is available. We shall be sending later on today precise terms of charge. These will mention Ansari by name but not his country of origin. You should explain to MFA that she is appearing in court this afternoon to be charged under Section of the CSA (relevant section of CSA will be telegraphed to you (- TEL AVIV ONLY)).

You should emphasise that I intend that this case should not in any way affect my forthcoming visit. It seems unlikely that the case will be brought to trial until after the visit. We shall make it plain to the media here that arrangements for this case are

ahead as planned. You should add that though the case is certain to give rise to some publicity we shall not be able to comment on it since it will be sub judice.

3. For CAIRO. Miss Ritchie is a First Secretary in our Embassy in Tel Aviv. We shall be notifying Egyptian Ambassador here as near as possible to 3.15 p.m. London time today of this case.