

Prime Minister

1

Ref. A082/0455

MR BUTLER

Yes not

Are you content that we should arrange for a question to be put down to be answered in these terms on Monday or Tuesday?

Miss Rhona Ritchie

FERB

9.12.

In your minute of 6th December, enclosing the Leader of the Opposition's letter agreeing that the Ritchie case should be referred to the Security Commission, you asked for advice on the terms of an announcement.

2. I agree that this is best done by another arranged Question and I attach a draft. I will advise separately on Mr Foot's request that a debate should not be delayed as a result of this additional reference to the Commission.

RIA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

9th December 1982



THE CASE OF MISS RHONA RITCHIE

To ask the Prime Minister whether, further to her reply of 30th November to the Hon Member for Preston North, she has decided to refer the case of Miss Rhona Ritchie to the Security Commission.

DRAFT ANSWER

The Prime Minister

After consulting the Chairman of the Security Commission and the rt hon Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, I have decided to refer this case to the Security Commission. The terms of reference will be:

"To investigate the circumstances in which breaches of security have, or may have, occurred arising out of the case of Rhona Jane Ritchie, who was convicted on 29th November 1982 of an offence under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911; and to advise in the light of that investigation whether any change in security arrangements is necessary or desirable."

It will be for the Commission to decide whether the issues raised in this case overlap with their current investigation into the case of Geoffrey Arthur Prime and whether to report on the two together or separately. Their findings will be laid before the House to the fullest extent compatible with national security.



10 DOWNING STREET

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Jr Howard

huc

Security

R07

B/c Mr. KICKETT
Mr. INGHAM

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG
CABINET OFFICE

MISS RHONA RITCHIE

Thank you for your minute (A082/0455). The Prime Minister has agreed that a question should be put down and answered on Tuesday, 14 December in the terms attached to your minute.

E. E. R. BUTLER

10 December, 1982

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