

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

Ref. A084/978

MR BUTLER

*I was reluctant in the first place to refer it. Agree now that it be NOT referred to Security Commission: Miss Sarah Tisdall*

*Accept this second thought? I have a feeling that the leader of the Opposition might make a difficulty about a reference.*

*FRB 28.3.*

When I met the Prime Minister on 23 March, she accepted (as recorded in your minute of that date) that it would be advantageous to refer the Tisdall case to the Security Commission, so that they could examine the question whether special precautions needed to be taken in relation to Private Office staff.

2. I still think that there would be advantages in that; but I now wonder whether, in the light of the recent publicity about the conviction and sentence of Miss Tisdall, a reference would look as if the Government were determined to pursue her almost vindictively by all possible means. Though I should have liked to get the endorsement of the Security Commission for any additional precautions that it might seem sensible to take in relation to Private Office staff, I think that we could manage well enough without that if we had to; and I do not think that the case would otherwise justify a reference to the Security Commission.

3. On balance, therefore, I should like to change my mind and, in the new circumstances, recommend against a reference.

ReA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

27 March 1984

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27 FEB 1984



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Security Commission: Miss Sarah Tisdall

The Prime Minister has seen your minute of 27 March (A084/978) and agrees that the case of Miss Sarah Tisdall should not be referred to the Security Commission.

A. J. COLES

29 March, 1984

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GT .