



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 August, 1982

Dear Michael,

In my statement to the House on 20 July I said that any security issues arising from the prosecution under Section 1 of the Official Secrets Act 1911 of Mr. G.A. Prime, a former employee of the Government Communications Headquarters, would be referred as necessary to the Security Commission.

Sir Robert Armstrong has now consulted Lord Bridge, the Chairman of the Security Commission, on my behalf about the case, and he agrees that an investigation by the Commission will almost certainly be necessary at some stage. He also sought Lord Bridge's views on the timing of any reference. Although the procedure described in Sir Harold Wilson's statement to the House of 10 May 1965 permits a reference to the Commission before the completion of the legal proceedings, I have decided, in the light of Lord Bridge's advice, that this would not be desirable in this case.

The prosecution case against Prime is likely to depend to a great extent on statements made by him to the police, and the course the case will follow will much depend on the attitude which

/ he and his

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he and his advisers adopt towards the prosecution. It could have unfortunate consequences for the conduct of the case if he were to be interviewed by the Commission, or by someone acting on behalf of them, before the trial; and it is in any case likely that an interview after the trial would be more productive. I therefore propose to delay any reference until the legal proceedings are complete, so that the Commission's inquiry can then be as full and thorough as possible.

I will be in touch with you again after Prime's trial and before any formal reference is made.

Your sincerely
Raymond Maitland

The Rt. Hon. Michael Foot, M.P.