

IN-CONFIDENCE

Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry
G.P.O. Box 5218,
Sydney, N.S.W. 2001.

C13 FILE No. /

ARCHIVAL ACTION

FORMER PAPERS

LATER PAPERS

TITLE INTERVIEW OF DAVID LEWINGTON,
SINGAPORE.

(See ALLEGATION NO.2 FILE).

Related Papers

[illegible]

FILE NO


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les Ross
→ 13 ph.

He acknowledged that Mr Wells would start with the Commission tomorrow and requested that I inform Mr Wells that he was to be in touch with Commissioner Grey himself "if he had any doubts".

I asked the Commissioner to indicate a contact other than Mr Farmer within the AFP. He indicated that I should be in touch with him direct on substantive matters and Assistant Commissioner Bates on routine matters.

The Commissioner will be away from 17 July on leave when I should be in touch with Deputy Commissioner Johnson direct. If I have difficulty in reaching General Grey at any time, Inspector Barzins will be able to arrange contact.



J F Thomson
Secretary

3 July 1986

File Ref: ~~A13~~

Shortly after my discussion with General Grey on 2 July (see file note), Assistant Commissioner Bates telephoned me to confirm that he had been nominated by the Commissioner to be my contact on "mundane things".

He indicated that Mr Lewington would be proceeding on leave shortly to *Katmandu (he subsequently rang back to say that Lewington would be available next week for interview and said he would confirm that 7 and 8 July would be suitable times for us to visit Lewington in Singapore).

He said that "Mr Wells' situation was catered for" and he "saw no problems at all with the arrangements". If there were, he said, Mr Wells could contact him. I said that the Commissioner had asked me to inform Mr Wells that he should contact the Commissioner if Mr Wells had any doubts. Mr Bates confirmed that this still obtained.

Mr Bates said he would be on 5 days leave from 9 - 15 July and would be out of Australia from 22 July - 10 August. During this period my contact is Chief Superintendent Arthur Brown who he said had some knowledge of the matters we are dealing with as he had worked with DPP. Mr Brown's number in Canberra is 731319.

J F Thomson
Secretary

3 July 1986

* Now renamed as the UK, not Kathmandu

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3/7

F E NOTE

File Ref: ^C A13

On 2 July at 12.15 I tried unsuccessfully to contact General Grey, Commissioner, Australian Federal Police. (On Monday 23 June I had spoken to General Grey on the flight Canberra-Sydney and he had suggested that his contact in the AFP be Deputy Commissioner Roy Farmer. It has since emerged from discussion that Mr Farmer may be a person to be interviewed in connection with the Commission's inquiry and it would be, therefore, inappropriate for him to be our contact in the AFP.) General Grey's Secretary invited me to speak with some other person and transferred me to Deputy Commissioner Johnson. I explained to him the problem outlined in parenthesis above.

He indicated that he understood and that he agreed that Mr Farmer was not an appropriate person for me to speak with. He said that he would be our contact point and undertook to inform General Grey of this.

Accordingly, I raised the following matters with him.

I said that a Police Officer, David Lewington, was, we understood, posted to Singapore and that we were anxious to interview him. I said that if Lewington were returning in the next few days we could interview him here otherwise we would send officers to Singapore. He ascertained immediately that Mr Lewington would not be returning to Sydney inside six months and that he is at present on leave. He undertook to ascertain his present whereabouts and dates when he would be in Singapore, and to let me know.

I informed him that Mr Wells was due to start with us on 3 July for approximately two weeks and raised with him the question of Wells' role, in particular whether, acknowledging that Mr Wells will not be used by us within that period in any investigatory role, he would nevertheless be able to obtain additional information from the AFP on any matter. Mr Johnson indicated that there would be no difficulty in this but asked that Mr Wells talk first with Assistant Commissioner Brian Bates.

I also raised with him the question whether Mr Wells would be expected by the police to report back to them, noting that under our statute, public servants were required to perform their functions and duties in accordance with the directions of the Presiding Member and not otherwise (S.20). Mr Johnson indicated that there were legal difficulties in the way of this (cf. Australian Federal Police Act) but that in practical terms there would be no need for Mr Wells to be briefing his superiors and that he, Johnson, would not be asking Wells what he was doing here. He indicated that to raise the matter formally was likely to be counter productive (and I accept that this is probably so).

(Seen by Mr Weinberg)

~~Mr Weinberg~~

~~Mr Roberts~~

~~Mr Dwyer~~

11/7/86
Mr Phelan
Mr Smith

To See please

4/7
Mr Ross
to file please
A13

I took the opportunity of explaining to him that if an arrangement were to be worked out under which police officers were made available to us as investigators, we would be very keen to have officers with skills in interviewing witnesses, preparing briefs and developing a brief of the kind that would ordinarily be prepared for court proceedings. (Although the Commission is not a court it is required to be satisfied on matters on the basis of evidence admissible in a court.) Mr Johnson took note of this.

I also raised the matter of possible indemnities from disciplinary proceedings for police officers. He indicated that this was not in his view unreasonable, noting that indemnities had been given in the Social Security Frauds matter. I pointed out that recommendations for indemnity had also been made by the Stewart Commission.

Mr Johnson indicated that he would bring this matter to the notice of the Commissioner.



J F Thomson
Secretary

3 July 198


FILE NOTE

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Late on 2 July Mr Durack and Mr Weinberg raised with me the possibility of their travelling to Singapore to interview David Lewington, a police officer posted with the Australian Federal Police to Singapore. After satisfying myself that the proposed interview was essential to the Commission's inquiry, I put in train inquiries with the appropriate authorities namely the Australian Federal Police, SMOS and Foreign Affairs.

Police advice (Chief Inspector Lamb) was that Lewington would be in Singapore week commencing 7 July, leaving 13 July for the UK. I confirmed with Mr Simons of SMOS that dispatch of two officers as proposed was within the power of the Presiding Member and that reference to the Overseas Visits Committee was unnecessary. I endeavoured to contact the Presiding Member on 3 July without success and in the meantime subject to his approval of travel, I spoke with Mr Wally Handmer, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore only to let him know that two officers of the Commission would be in Singapore. Mr Handmer took note of the information and indicated that he saw no difficulties in the proposal.

I contacted Sir George at 09.35 on 4 July and raised the matter with him. He questioned whether there was any likelihood of Lewington coming to Australia in the very near future. I had already inquired of the police as to this and explained to Sir George that he would not be. Sir George approved the proposed travel arrangements.


J F Thomson
Secretary

4 July 1986

1. Mr Smeaton (to see pls)
2. Mr Ross → file C13
J A18