



Home Affairs Committee

29 September 2025

Stephen Parkinson
Director of Public Prosecutions
Crown Prosecution Service
Via email



Justice Committee

Dear Stephen

We are writing on behalf of our respective committees to seek further information about the reasons for the recent decision of the Crown Prosecution Service to drop charges against two individuals for espionage offences under the Official Secrets Act 1911.

As you know, it is normal practice for the CPS to provide a reason for any decision not to proceed with charges, both in fairness to the victims and in the interests of transparency. The explanation provided by the CPS so far in this case, that the “evidential standard for the offence indicted is no longer met”, falls some way short of the level of detail that is acceptable for a case of this seriousness and one that has a bearing on the ability of parliamentarians to perform their duties.

It is the role of our committees to scrutinise the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and to hold to account those responsible for any serious failings. A clear explanation for the dropping of charges in this case is required in order to inform an assessment of whether there have been any such failings. It is in our shared interest to provide reassurance to parliamentarians and the public that the necessary protections against foreign interference in our democracy are in place and fully functional. It is also in our shared interest to demonstrate transparency and accountability in order to promote trust in the criminal justice system.

To this end, we ask for an explanation behind the changes in the standard or availability of evidence which led to your decision, including your own assessment as to where responsibility for such changes lies. If it is not possible to provide such an explanation in public, we would be prepared to consider a private meeting before considering whether further action is warranted.



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We would be grateful for a response by 8 October, which we will publish.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley MP
Chair of the Home Affairs Committee

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair of the Justice Committee