

CONFIDENTIAL



Ref. A083/0244

MR COLES

Debate on the Franks Report

We spoke about the draft opening speech and I suggested that it might be worth expanding the paragraph introducing the Prime Minister's response to the Committee's observations on the intelligence machinery to contain a warning to the House about the sensitivity of discussing intelligence matters, along the lines of the draft paragraph which Mr Fall sent you on 15 December 1982.

2. This now needs revising somewhat in the light of the extent of the Franks Committee's disclosures and comments on intelligence machinery matters in particular and I attach a draft paragraph which I suggest might be added immediately following the paragraph beginning "Mr Speaker, these are matters which it is our custom not to discuss ..." on page 15.

*M.*

R P HATFIELD

24 January 1983

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DRAFT PARAGRAPH

However, before discussing this aspect of the Franks Report, it is my duty to remind the House that anything which we say on this subject is certain to be reported, and probably given wide publicity, outside this House and abroad. I am sure that the House would wish to do nothing which might make the tasks of our own security and intelligence people harder, or those of our opponents easier. I must therefore ask hon Members to exercise great self-restraint, and avoid any reference in their speeches to our own operations and techniques or to those of our closest allies.