

Ref. A084/84

MR FLESHER

Prime Minister:

No - I do
Not release
letters I write to
others. They are
confidential
to them not

Agree to this
arranged Question?

JD

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The "Freedom of Information Campaign"

Now that the Prime Minister's letter of 7 December to Mr Des Wilson has been given to the Press, it would seem courteous to place copies in the House Libraries before Parliament reassembles, with an announcement in an arranged PQ on Monday 16 January to forestall complaints that Members were not aware that copies were available to them.

2. This may also be helpful to the Home Secretary who has an oral Question on 19 January from Mr Archie Kirkwood MP asking him "what representations he has received recently on the working of the Official Secrets Act". This could clearly lead into the area of "Freedom of Information" and the Home Secretary is likely to wish to refer to the Prime Minister's letter which is the most recent statement of the Government's policy.

--- 3. I attach a draft Question and Answer. Mr John Wheeler MP, who took part in the BBC programme "The World at One" on 5 January and spoke against legislation in this area, might perhaps be willing to put down such a Question. An equivalent Question would need to be tabled in the Lords.

R P HATFIELD

9 January 1984



Question: To ask the Prime Minister, if she will place in the Library a copy of her letter of 7 December 1983 to Mr Des Wilson, about the Government's policy on the release of official information.

DRAFT ANSWER

Copies were placed in the Library on [Monday 16].

January 1984

CONQUEROR