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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

11 December 1984

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Dear James,

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS RECESS

As you know, the House will adjourn for the Christmas Recess on Friday 21 December. It is, therefore, time for me to make my usual plea about controversial announcements immediately before that date.

The pressure of Parliamentary business before the Recess frequently results in a large number of Answers being delivered during the last couple of days; and this can lead to problems where Answers are given on controversial subjects in that the Opposition frequently allege that such Answers have been deliberately timed to prevent the House from adequately considering the matter in question. I should, therefore, be obliged if you and copy addressees would take what steps you can to ensure that no controversial Written Answer is delivered later than Tuesday 18 December, thus appearing in Hansard on the Wednesday morning. Where the timing of a Question is such that it seems impossible to meet this requirement, this Office should be warned in advance.

I am copying this letter to the Parliamentary Clerks in all Government Departments, Tim Flesher and Murdo Maclean.

yours

Charles

C M J MARSHALL
Private Secretary

J Acton Esq
Parliamentary Clerk
Home Office

111 DEC 1984

