



file

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*From the Private Secretary*

30 April 1986

Thank you for your letter of 24 April about Mr Holt's libel action. I have now discussed the matter once again with colleagues here and consulted the Prime Minister. It is our view that it would be unacceptable for a member of staff of this office to be called to give oral evidence about the internal workings of the Prime Minister's office and the way in which she is briefed for Prime Minister's Questions. We are not therefore prepared to take any action which would increase the risk that this might happen. Accordingly I shall be grateful if you could arrange to reply to Mr Holt's solicitors to the effect that we cannot assist with his action in the way in which he wishes. I assume that this would mean indicating that any statements he wishes to make are on his own responsibility and without the corroboration of this office. Please let me know if this causes difficulties. I am sorry that we have had to go through this exercise in order to reach a conclusion which perhaps should have been apparent to us at the outset.

T Flesher

R A D Jackson Esq  
The Treasury Solicitor