

M15 BUGGED HUME/ADAMS?

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While it is not the practice, for obvious reasons, to confirm or deny the operations of the intelligence services, I urge the Hon Member not to give credence to this sort of allegation on the basis of unsubstantiated reports in the media.

MPs bugged?

The policy remains as stated in 1966 by the then Prime Minister, now Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, and as applied by successive Governments since then.

Lord Wilson said then that instructions had been given that there was to be no tapping of the telephones of Members of Parliament; and that if there was a development which required a change in that policy, he would make a statement to the House.

M15 doing unauthorised bugging?

The Commissioner for the Security Service, in his annual report, refers to:

"... speculation that members of the [Security] Service are carrying out operations involving unlawful interference with property, such as installing eavesdropping devices, without the authorization of a warrant ... I am in a position as a result of my experience over the past three years to express an informed opinion on this question. It is my opinion that such operations are

not undertaken."

M15 not accountable

The Security Service Act 1989 put the Security Service on a statutory footing, and introduced an independent Commissioner and a Tribunal to investigate complaints.

The Security Service is accountable to the Home Secretary, and through him, to Parliament.

Need parliamentary oversight of M15 etc?

The Government published on 24 November the Intelligence Services Bill, which provides for oversight of all three intelligence and security agencies by a committee of Parliamentarians.

[This House will have an opportunity to debate the accountability and oversight of the security and intelligence agencies - when it considers the Bill.]

Bugging:DL