



## 10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Employment Bill - Clause 16.

1. Herewith copy letter dated 20th May which was sent by Jim Prior to Ray Whitney.
2. There has been very considerable correspondence in the Times and in the Telegraph recently. Some of it highly critical of Clause 16.
3. The matter was raised during Prime Minister's Questions yesterday first by Ivor Stanbrook and then by Michael Shaw. Herewith Hansard. The relevant Columns (sidelined) are 792, 793 and 794.
4. The House of Lords debated Clause 16 yesterday. Unfortunately, the Hansard is not yet available. However, Ian Orr-Ewing made a very effective speech.
5. I have reported to you, separately, on the anxieties which were expressed ~~at~~ the meetings of the 1922 Committee held on 22nd May and on 12th June. Bearing in mind all these factors, including the anxiety of the Party in the country, is it really not possible to ask Jim to look at Clause 16 again, before the Report Stage in the Lords?
6. I fear that we will pay a high price next winter for our failure to amend the Bill now. I think that your position when the Bill is seen to have failed will be strengthened if you were to make one more effort to get the Department of Employment to strengthen the Bill at its Report Stage.
7. Ian Percival has asked me to say that he urges you most strongly to make one last effort to get Prior to see sense.
8. On a quite separate point, may I draw your attention to Du Cann's speech on the Construction Industry last night (Col. 905) of the attached Hansard.

13th June, 1980

  
Ian Gow