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Home Affairs

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The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON
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7 December 1981

Dear Willie,

Thank you for your letter of 28 November letting me know the outcome of your Department's review of the restrictions on shopping hours and on Sunday trading (in England and Wales) under the Shops Act 1950 and the next steps that you propose.

I confirm my general agreement with your proposals that the Government should not seek to impede the progress of Baroness Trumpington's Shops Bill and that an announcement should be made on the conclusions of the review during the debate on Second Reading and simultaneously by arranged PQ in the House of Commons.

I have one point of substance and one of detail to make. The first is that, from the Scottish point of view, I would see considerable advantage in allowing Baroness Trumpington's Bill to proceed with the repeal of the week-day trading restrictions, notably in Part I of the 1950 Act on which I continue to receive representations from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, even if the proposed repeal of Part IV on Sunday trading proves too controversial to attract general support. I note that the review concluded that there are reasonable grounds to suppose that a Bill to repeal the week-day trading restrictions would stand a good chance of success.

The point of detail relates to the draft question and answer. Since the Sunday trading provisions in Part IV of the 1950 Act do not apply in Scotland (apart from one minor exception), I suggest that in the draft question itself the words "in England and Wales" should be added after "including Sunday trading".

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

*Yours ever,
George.*



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