

Home Affairs



Prime Minister

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To note this matter about trading hours, despite the Govt view as set out by the Home Secretary in his earlier letter.

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw MP
Secretary of State for the Home Office
Home Office
Queen Annes Gate
Petty France
LONDON
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MP
5/2

5 February 1982

Dear Sir

I have been following with interest the correspondence on Baroness Trumpington's Shop Hours Bill, which is to receive its Second Reading in the Lords next Tuesday 9 February.

I and other Treasury Ministers have a good deal of sympathy with the views expressed by Janet Young in her letter to you of 10 December. In principle, we are strongly in favour of all restrictions on shopping hours being abolished: such a step would be altogether consonant with our policies on competition and improved services to consumers.

I recognise, however, that it is difficult for us to adopt any more positive attitude than one of benevolent neutrality. We cannot yet produce any persuasive economic arguments in favour of the Bill: as you know, the study which will explore these issues is only just being set up. I am not suggesting, therefore, that you should alter the text of your statement in any way. But I should like to take this opportunity to place Treasury views on record so that future discussions can take full account of them.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, members of "H" Committee, John Biffen, Peter Walker, Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr Ibbs.

Nicholas
Ridley

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

5 FEB 1992

