



Prime Minister 2  
 To be aware, I understand  
 the Chief Whips Office are copying with  
 the idea of Second Reading on 5 July. WH

22/6

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street. SW1P 3AG

01-233 3000

22 June 1982

Rt. Hon. John Biffen MP  
 Leader of the House

MS

Dear Lord President,

DUCHY OF CORNWALL BILL

You will remember that it was agreed by QL Committee (QL(81)6th Meeting), and then by the Cabinet on 30 July last year, that the Duchy of Cornwall Management Bill should be included in the Legislative Programme for this Session on condition that it was referred to Second Reading Committee.

The Opposition were subsequently consulted about the Bill and they agreed that it should be introduced and referred to the Second Reading Committee; and this has been done. The Opposition's agreement was subject to clearing up some detailed points on the Bill but these did not seem likely to cause any difficulty. In the event, however, the Opposition spokesman have not been able to reach agreement with us on these points, not, I believe, because we have been unable to satisfy them about the substance of the Bill but because of political difficulties on their part of being seen to be co-operating in giving a Bill on this subject an uninterrupted passage.

The Opposition would not have the same objection to an alternative procedure which would not involve them in overtly assisting the passage of the Bill. Their business managers have indicated that, if we take the Second Reading on the Floor of the House and the Committee stage in Standing Committee, they would expect the Bill to complete all its stages in the Commons in July. It would then go to the Lords for consideration in the Autumn and I understand that Janet Young is content with that.

We have had to decide quickly whether we would proceed on that basis, since the revised procedure would need to be announced this Thursday if the Commons stages are to be completed before the Recess. I have no doubt that we should proceed. This Bill is a useful measure which brings into

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the twentieth century the legislation governing the management of the Duchy of Cornwall Estate. Since the revenues from the Estate relieve the taxpayer of financing the Duke of Cornwall's official duties and the balance (as determined in periodic negotiations) is surrendered to the Government, anything which promotes the efficient management of the Estate is of direct benefit to the taxpayer. There is never a good time to take legislation touching on the affairs of the Royal family but no other time is likely to be more propitious than the present one and, having introduced and published the Bill, I am sure that we should not withdraw it.

After consulting you and the Chief Whip therefore, I agreed that we should proceed on this revised basis, \* ~~~~~~~~~ \* Since there is no meeting of Legislation Committee this Wednesday, I am circulating this letter to inform the Committee of this development. If any of our colleagues want to comment, they should do so by close of play tomorrow, 23 June.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of L Committee and Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,  
*Jim Rucker*

PP GEOFFREY HOWE

(Approved by the Chancellor and signed in his absence)

\*~\* Passage deleted and closed, 40 years,  
under FOI Exemption.

*Wayland*  
8 August 2013



Royal Family

Wh  
25/6

FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE  
HOUSE OF LORDS

24 June 1982

Dear Germes,

w/ku  
PM  
I have seen a copy of your letter of 22 June to John Biffen about the Duchy of Cornwall Management Bill and the need to take Second Reading on the floor of the House of Commons.

You say that I am content that all stages should be taken in the Lords in October. Given the pressures of the programme in the Lords and the uncertainties about the amount of business which will remain in October, I would, of course, have preferred to have taken at least Second Reading in the Lords before the Recess. It is certainly very important that the Bill should complete its stages in the Commons in time for a First Reading in the Lords before we rise for the Recess. But, subject to that point, we will plan for all substantive stages in the Lords in October and I do not, at this stage, anticipate any difficulties, though the programme will certainly be tight.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours ever  
Baroness

BARONESS YOUNG

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer

25 JUN 1982

