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Mr. Fisher - to see

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*From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service*

Sir Robert Armstrong GCB CVO

Ref. A084/2871

30 October 1984

*My dear Antony,*

--- My attention has been drawn to an item in yesterday's Times Diary ("Balancing Act" - copy attached) which says that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Parliamentary Private Secretary, Mr Richard Ryder MP, is to write leaders for the Daily Telegraph.

I must say that I find the suggestion, if true, very difficult to square with the guidelines on the position of Parliamentary Private Secretaries contained in Questions of Procedure for Ministers (paragraph 37-40). The difficulty, as pointed out in paragraph 39 of Questions of Procedure, is that, however careful they may be to make it clear that they are speaking (or writing) only as private Members, Parliamentary Private Secretaries are nevertheless liable to be regarded as speaking with some of the authority which attaches to a member of the Government. For this reason, I believe that it is very difficult for a Parliamentary Private Secretary to publish articles bearing or commenting upon matters relating to government policy or business - particularly (but not only) the business of the Department whose Minister he serves. These considerations seem to me to apply with added force in the case of leader articles in the Daily Telegraph; indeed, the item in The Times illustrates some of the criticism to which these would be open.

I should also add that Sir Keith Joseph is considering appointing George Walden as his Parliamentary Private Secretary, and has sought advice on whether in that circumstance it would be appropriate for Walden to continue his articles on foreign policy and current affairs in The Times and elsewhere. I have felt bound to advise that, while there would be no objection to his continuing to publish book reviews in the TLS and Books and

/Bookmen

Sir Antony Acland KCMG KCVO

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Bookmen, I do not believe that it would be appropriate for him to continue with his weekly articles in The Times if he was appointed a Parliamentary Private Secretary. If Richard Ryder were nonetheless to be permitted to contribute leaders to the Daily Telegraph, George Walden would have legitimate grounds for complaint.

*Yours ever*

*Robert*

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...the case...  
...legally...  
...although he did...  
...not unmoved by the...  
...By then Dr Patel...  
...who had throughout strenuously...  
...denied the charges, but had under-...  
...standably claimed diplomatic...  
...immunity, had returned to India...  
...Yesterday Dr Patel said: "We looked...  
...after her every need and she went...  
...back happily." An ASE spokesman...  
...said the selection committee had...  
...been aware of the case.

### Red rag

Sir James Goldsmith, incensed by jibes that after three years his £50,000 prize for exposés of Soviet infiltration of the western media is still unawarded, tells me he is determined to find a worthy recipient next year. Journalists in search of easy loot should not call him; he will call them. The presentation will be made on October 8 - the anniversary of this month's settlement of *Der Spiegel's* libel action against him. Sir James's belief in the communist threat is as fierce as ever; indeed he has even slipped journalists the odd fiver to encourage red-bashing, but won't name names.

● Robert Maxwell's paranoia continues apace: the Mirror Group is currently advertising for a barrister and a solicitor, emphasizing the importance of experience - in litigation.

### Balancing act

*Daily Telegraph* journalists fear they have lost all credibility for political independence following the disclosure at the weekend that Sir Geoffrey Howe's new PPS, Richard Ryder, MP, is to write leaders for the paper. They contend that he cannot comment impartially in the *Telegraph* while carrying out his duty to promote the Government. Ryder's first leader was due today but he failed to write it because he was unwell. He protested that he will not comment on foreign affairs, and will only be doing Sunday relief. "You mean there is a feeling that I could be biased?" he asked. "Well that is not for me to comment."

### Cross purposes

Brian Crozier, founder of the Institute for the Study of Conflict, says he has chosen to write a novel about Soviet espionage because the "British law of libel is a very real obstacle in factual works." For the book, *The Andropov Deception*, he has adopted the pen name John Rossiter. It is not fictional enough to avoid other difficulties. The agent for a real-life John Rossiter, ex-policeman and crime novelist, has written to Crozier's publishers. "Andropov? I've never met the chap," he says.

HARRY FANTONI

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...photographs...  
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The results of the Yorkshire very low. Eggs tonnes and tonnes, enough weeks at full Drax and T respectively, the full-output stations have supplies since the



Jamaica Plain is ride from the center the taxi driver way. It is an immita Hispanic, but the Jamaica Plain is a is why Jayne Anne here, in Victorian last two years - Boston literary m fete her, larding h and adjectives attention.

Jayne Anne Ph *Black Tickets*, (a fictions written in prose) was published extravagant praise translated into te first novel, *Machi* the American liter by storm in June. fabric of writers' de "a rare and imp fiction" sums up th