



*Parliament*  
 Prime Minister (2)

MUS 8/3

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG  
 01-233 3000

The Rt Hon John Biffen, MP  
 Lord President of the Council

7 March 1983

*John Biffen*

*MB*

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY ARRANGEMENTS: LEGISLATION

At its meeting on 28 February, the Future Legislation Committee decided to include in the Essential category in the 1983-84 legislative programme a short Bill on International Monetary Arrangements. In the light of recent discussions in the IMF Executive Board about the arrangements for implementing Quota increases I think we probably need now to contemplate introducing the Bill in May.

As you know, this is a technical Bill largely required by the recent agreements to increase IMF resources. It is also intended to cover provision of Treasury indemnities to the Bank of England in cases such as their involvement in the support operations organised by the Bank of International Settlements for Mexico and Brazil.

The timetable problem arises from the need to put the IMF in a position to draw as early as practicable on the resources made available by the enlargement of the GAB agreed by G-10 countries in January and the Quota settlement concluded in Washington last month. In my capacity as Chairman of the Interim Committee I pressed for decisions in these areas to be accelerated. Many countries need to take associated legislative action. It was agreed in Washington last month that we should all aim to complete the necessary procedures by the end of this calendar year. This was 6 months earlier than even the accelerated timetable previously contemplated and had advantages for the US in relation to handling Congress. No increase in quotas becomes effective until members having 70% of the new quota total have consented to their increase.

/With a reasonable

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With a reasonable degree of Opposition co-operation and adequate priority it might have been possible to introduce a Bill of the sort we had in mind in October/November and still meet an end-year deadline. However in their latest detailed discussion of implementation arrangements the Executive Board concluded that the objectives set by the Interim Committee for availability of new funds would in practice require notifications of completion of legislative action to be received by 30 November. The final stages of payment of subscription etc could then take place in December.

This further advancement of the deadline seems to me to make it imprudent to leave introduction of our related Bill to the autumn. Opinion in the House generally would seem likely to favour the enlargement of IMF resources and the guarantees provided to cover Bank of England participation in the Mexico and Brazil rescue operations appear to have attracted little or no Parliamentary interest. But it would perhaps be unwise to assume a totally trouble free passage - the recent fuss over loans to Argentina has still to die away - and there would be a bare month to complete all stages.

Against this background I conclude that it is necessary to think in terms of starting the legislative process off in May. If this were done, it may well not yet be possible to forecast in detail how later stages would be handled, not least until decisions are taken on the timing of the election. But the May option would appear a good deal less hazardous than an October/November one.

If you agree with this approach, I would propose to seek formal approval for the Bill probably by correspondence. We would put the Bill to Legislation Committee in the second half of April.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Lord Chancellor, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Lord Privy Seal.

GEOFFREY HOWE

12 DOWNING STREET,  
S.W.1.

*With*

*The Private Secretary's*

*Compliments*

GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION(i) Second Reading

Agricultural Holdings (Amendment) (Scotland)  
 British Fishing Boats  
 Dentists (L)  
 Local Authorities (Expenditure Powers)  
 Mental Health (Amendment) (Scotland) (L)  
 Ports (Reduction of Debt)

(ii) Standing Committee

Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications (L)  
 International Transport Conventions (L)  
 Merchant Shipping (L)  
 Mobile Homes (L)  
 National Heritage (L)  
 Plant Varieties (L)  
 Police and Criminal Evidence  
 Telecommunications

(iii) Report and Third Reading

Energy  
 Housing and Building Control  
 Miscellaneous Financial Provisions

(iv) Orders and Regulations

	<u>Date Laid</u>	<u>Whether Controversial</u>	<u>Date Required</u>
Agriculture - Capital Grants Schemes (3)	2/3	No	Few days before Easter
*Agricultural Products	21/2	No	By Easter
Appropriation (N.I.)	16/2	No	For debate 10/3
Code of Practice (Closed Shop)	2/3	Yes	By Easter
Hire-purchase	28/2	No	By Easter
House of Commons Disqualification	14/2	No	By Easter
Industrial Development	25/2	No	By Easter
Licensing (N.I.)	16/2	Maybe	For debate 10/3
London Docklands Development Corporation	17/1	Yes	A.S.A.P.
Pig Industry Levy Scheme	2/3	No	A.S.A.P.
Pneumoconiosis	17/2	No	By Easter

v) Orders and Regulations (continued)

	<u>Date Laid</u>	<u>Whether Controversial</u>	<u>Date Required</u>
Prevention of Terrorism	9/2	Yes	For debate 7/3
Rates (Amendment) (N.I.)	22/2	No	For debate 10/3
Representation of the People	22/2	No	By 21/3
Representation of the People (N.I.)	24/2	No	By early March
Social Security	25/2	No	By Easter
Traffic Areas	24/2	No	By Easter

Lords

British Shipbuilders

Civil Aviation (Eurocontrol)

Conwy Tunnel (Supplementary Powers)

Currency

Data Protection (L)

Divorce Jurisdiction, Court Fees and Legal Aid Scotland

Marriage (L)

∅Matrimonial Homes (L)

∅Mental Health (L)

Nuclear Material (Offences)

∅Pilotage (L)

Transport

Water

∅Consolidation

Bills placed upon the Statute Book (8)

Agricultural Marketing 1983

Commonwealth Development Corporation 1982

Consolidated Fund 1983

~~Electricity (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) 1982~~

Lands Valuation Amendment (Scotland) 1982

National Insurance Surcharge 1982

Pig Industry Levy 1983

Representation of the People 1983

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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

21 April 1983

*Dear Geoffrey*

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY ARRANGEMENTS: LEGISLATION

Thank you for your letter of 19 April.

As you will know, the International Monetary Arrangements Bill was discussed in L Committee on 20 April. The conclusion reached was that the Chief Whip would do his best to find space for your Bill in this Session, but that this could not be guaranteed. It was recognised that in the event priorities might require your Bill to be introduced at the beginning of next Session instead, in which case, Royal Assent could still be given before the end of the year as you require.

I am sure, however, that the Chief Whip will do his best in what is an increasingly difficult situation.

I am copying this letter to the other recipients of yours.

*Yours  
John Biffen*

JOHN BIFFEN

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Treasury Chambers  
Parliament Street  
LONDON SW1P 3AG



Parliament,  
Legislation,  
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Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG  
01-233 3000

19 April 1983

The Rt. Hon. John Biffen MP  
Lord President of the Council

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Biffen'.

**INTERNATIONAL MONETARY ARRANGEMENTS: LEGISLATION**

Many thanks for letting me know - your letter of 14 April - that it may be difficult to fit in my International Monetary Arrangements Bill by the end of July.

You will since have seen my paper L(83)46 of the same date, which enclosed the print of the Bill, now a two-topic money Bill, much shorter than previously foreseen, and largely uncontroversial. The Treasury Committee have promised it a fair wind. It covers an area where we have a good story to tell, and there must be a chance that all the stages after Second Reading could be completed in a single day. I still see a strong case for introducing it soon.

I am copying this letter to the other recipients of yours.

GEOFFREY HOWE

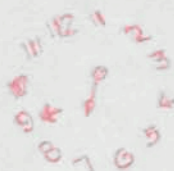
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12 DOWNING STREET,  
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*With*

*The Private Secretary's*

*Compliments*

GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

- (i) Second Reading  
Marriage (L)
- (ii) Standing Committee  
Data Protection (L)  
Dentists (L)  
Finance  
Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications (L)  
Local Authorities (Expenditure Powers)  
Mental Health (Amendment) (Scotland) (L)

- (iii) Committee of Whole House  
Finance  
∅ Matrimonial Homes (L)  
∅ Mental Health (L)  
∅ Pilotage (L)  
Social Security and Housing Benefits

- (iv) Report and Third Reading  
Agricultural Holdings (Amendment) (Scotland)  
Mobile Homes (L)  
National Heritage (L)  
Police and Criminal Evidence

(v)	<u>Orders and Regulations</u>	<u>Date Laid</u>	<u>Whether Controversial</u>	<u>Date Required</u>
	Agricultural and Horticultural	11/4	No	By 6/5
	*Agricultural Products	21/2	No	A.S.A.P.
	Customs Duties	31/3	No	By end of April
	Dogs (N.I.)	17/3	Maybe	For debate, 21/4
	*Housing Corporation Advances	17/3	No	By end of April
	Hovercraft	12/4	No	By 9/5
	Merchant Shipping	12/4	No	By 9/5
	Misuse of Drugs	29/3	No	No deadline
	Supplementary Benefit	29/3	No	By beginning of May
	Traffic Areas	24/2	No	A.S.A.P.

- ∅ Consolidation  
\* S.I. Committee

Lords

British Shipbuilders

Energy

Housing and Building Control

∅ Litter (L)

∅ Medical (L)

Miscellaneous Financial Provisions

Nuclear Material (Offences)

Plant Varieties (L)

Ports (Reduction of Debt)

Telecommunications

Water

∅ Consolidation

Bills placed upon the Statute Book (17)

Agricultural Marketing 1983

British Fishing Boats 1983

Civil Aviation (Eurocontrol) 1983

Commonwealth Development Corporation 1982

Consolidated Fund 1983

Consolidated Fund (No 2) 1983

Conwy Tunnel (Supplementary Powers) 1983

Currency 1983

Divorce Jurisdiction, Court Fees and Legal Aid (Scotland) 1983

Electricity (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) 1982

International Transport Conventions 1983

Lands Valuation Amendment (Scotland) 1982

Merchant Shipping 1983

National Insurance Surcharge 1982

Pig Industry Levy 1983

Representation of the People 1983

Transport 1983

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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

14 April 1983

Dear Geoffrey,

I wrote to you on 14 March about the timetable for your proposed International Monetary Arrangements Bill. I suggested that you should have the Bill prepared, but that we should defer a final decision on whether or not to try to fit it in this Session until it came before Legislation Committee.

I understand that this discussion is now to be next week, but I think that it is only fair to warn you that, since I last wrote, further, and I fear inescapable, demands have been made upon the small amount of legislative time that remains to us this Session. We shall have to accommodate Nigel Lawson's Bill on North Sea oil royalties, which is, of course, a Budget consequential; and it now seems clear that, subject to policy agreement, we shall have to find time for Peter Walker's Bill to control milk imports. In addition, Cabinet agreed this morning that legislation should proceed on the question of overseas students. In these circumstances, I am afraid that I see real difficulty in also coping with International Monetary Arrangements by the end of July.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of the earlier correspondence.

Yours  
John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Treasury Chambers  
Parliament Street  
LONDON SW1

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Prime Minister

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

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14 March 1983

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Dear Geoffrey,

Thank you for your letter of 7 March, in which you explained the need to pass the International Monetary Arrangements Bill by the end of this calendar year.

I accept that the aim of securing Royal Assent before Christmas could be put at risk if the Bill is not introduced until the beginning of next Session. On the other hand, we are already encountering some congestion in this Session's timetable and I am reluctant at this stage to accept a firm commitment to add another Bill to the legislative programme. I suggest, therefore, that you should press ahead as quickly as you can with the preparation of your Bill and that we should take a final decision on whether or not it can be fitted in this Session when it comes before Legislation Committee. I appreciate your concern that we should meet the IMF deadlines and you can be sure that we shall do our best to see that the Bill is passed in time.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours, and to Michael Jopling and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours

John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Treasury Chambers  
Parliament Street  
London SW1