



CCNO

QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

15 November 1983

R. White,

[Handwritten initials]

PARLIAMENTARY PENSIONS BILL

I am writing to let you know that I have obtained John Biffen's agreement to the inclusion in the Parliamentary Pensions Bill of a provision to amend the severance arrangements for Members of the European Parliament to bring them into line with those of their Westminster counterparts.

When the MEPs' severance scheme was set up under the European Assembly (Pay and Pensions) Act in 1979 it was intended to be identical with the Westminster one, but the latter was altered shortly afterwards and there is now a discrepancy: whilst Westminster MPs are entitled to a severance grant equivalent to six months' salary if after five years they fail to be re-elected, MEPs stand to receive only three months'. There has as you know been some pressure for parity to be restored, and it is likely that this will increase with the approach of the 1984 elections. Parliament accepted in 1979 the principle that the two schemes should be the same and there is therefore a strong argument in principle for putting the two schemes once more on an equality. The Parliamentary Pensions Bill is a convenient vehicle for a provision to bring about this change which otherwise would need legislation of its own. The Treasury have been consulted and are content. If you and the colleagues to whom I am copying this letter agree, I shall write to Jack Stewart-Clark who is Chairman of the Managers of the MEPs' scheme informing him of our decision.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the members of H Committee and Sir Robert Armstrong.

[Handwritten signature]

The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw, CH, MC

1 NOV 1983





CC: NO

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

8 December 1983

PS
9/12

Dear Sir

PARLIAMENTARY PENSIONS BILL

Thank you for your letter of 15 November seeking agreement to including provisions on MEPs' severance pay in the Parliamentary Pensions Bill. I see that John Biffen and Barney Hayhoe are content, and in the absence of dissent from other colleagues you may take it that you have H Committee's approval for the change.

I am copying this reply to the Prime Minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, other members of H Committee and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

John Biffen
Barney Hayhoe

The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP

Patient: Legimakin Pt 11E