



Prime Minister <sup>①</sup>

TRANSPORT BILL

I am writing to seek policy approval for inclusion in the Transport Bill of some minor provisions which do not form part of the proposals approved for legislation by E(A).

I am very conscious of the need to restrict the length of the Bill and I have ruled out a number of desirable but inessential bids. I believe however there is a strong case for including the following items:

Transport Consumer Bodies

This provision would extend the power of the transport consumer bodies to allow them to consider the relativity of fares and charges imposed by BR and London Regional Transport, and reductions in British Rail services. There can be no question of giving them powers which could affect the ability of the industries to meet their targets. At present the consumer bodies are statutorily precluded from considering these matters. Provisions to extend their powers as I propose will fulfil a commitment given during passage of the LRT Bill to introduce legislation when and if a suitable opportunity arose. As such they will be welcomed. The Transport Bill already contains provisions on bus substitution which affect the consumer bodies' role and as such it is a convenient vehicle to use to honour the commitments made. Indeed, if provisions are not included in the Bill, we can expect amendments to be tabled on the matter.



We are discussing one matter of detail about the fares provision with DTI Ministers. The point can, I am sure, be settled between us quickly.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry is responsible for arranging staff for these transport bodies. At his request, I should like to take this opportunity to empower the Central Transport Consultative Committee and the Transport Users Consultative Committees to recruit and employ their own staff. This would bring them into line with the London Regional Passengers' Committee and most other nationalised industry consumer bodies.

These provisions would probably need 2 clauses.

#### Trust Ports

I propose to seek the removal of a variety of ministerial controls and restrictions on the borrowing and audit of trust ports. This will allow a reclassification of trust ports to the private sector bringing public expenditure savings of about £50 million per year. This provision would obviously broaden the scope of the Bill, but I believe the advantages in public expenditure terms outweigh the disadvantages of its inclusion. Peter Rees is prepared to take account of the public expenditure savings in the Autumn Statement and the Public Expenditure White Paper; but we need to announce our intention to legislate as soon as possible.

This provision would need 2 clauses.

#### Control of Harbour Development

Earlier this year Parliament approved the revocation of the Harbour Development Orders under which the Government exercised control over harbour investment in excess



of £3 million. I propose now to seek the repeal of Sections 9 and 10 of the Harbours Act under which those Orders were made. This formalises a policy which has already been effected, and I would not anticipate significant opposition.

This provision would need 1 clause.

PSV Driver Licensing

The present regulations governing the testing and licensing of Public Service Vehicle (PSV) drivers rest on unsatisfactory powers. I propose to provide for a firmer legislative basis. This is a minor non-controversial provision, but is consistent with our general commitment in the "Buses" White Paper to maintain safety standards in the bus industry. This provision would however also enable drivers of very small PSVs (typically cars used as PSVs) to be exempt from the requirement to hold a PSV driver's licence, a requirement which is often unnecessary, as, for instance, when the Post Office are using estate cars as Post Buses in remote areas. It is within scope of the Bill as approved.

This provision would probably need 1 clause.

Railway Accident Reporting

This provision would allow us to bring accident reporting procedures for British Rail and other statutory railways into line with the proposed new Health and Safety Executive Regulations for other industries. These will almost certainly change the basis for reporting accidents from 3 days absence to 7 days absence from work. In the case of railways the 3 day basis is incorporated in railway



legislation, and I propose to seek power to amend the time limit by order. This is a non-controversial but important provision. It would avoid an unwelcome difference in the basis on which industrial injuries are reportable under the railway and Health and Safety legislation. The Health and Safety Executive supports strongly its inclusion because it would retain the comparability of accident statistics throughout industry. It is within the scope of the Bill as approved. It would need 1 clause.

### Conclusion

Work on all these provisions is very advanced and none would delay the introduction of the Bill. None is particularly controversial. They are unlikely therefore to delay the passage of the Bill. On the other hand they have significant advantages. The transport consumer provision can be presented as a plus point for the consumer. The two ports provisions are a further step to bringing increased commercial disciplines to the ports industry and reducing Government control. The other two provisions are minor but very helpful.

In view of the need for a quick decision on the Trust Port item, I should be grateful for your early agreement, as Chairman of E(A), to these additional provisions.

I am copying this to other members of E(A) , to members of L and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

13 November 1984

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L: LPSO  
LPCO  
LCO  
SO  
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AOD  
LAD

Parl. Sec. HMT  
M/S, FCO (Mr Rifkin)  
M/S, HO (Mr Shaw)  
Fin. Sec. Office HMT  
Captain of Genl Air Army  
Office

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 November, 1984

bc N.O.

Transport Bill

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 13 November. Subject to the views of colleagues, she is content with the additional clauses proposed for the Transport Bill. She has commented, however, that care should be taken in defining the role of Transport Consumer Bodies. It should be made very clear that their right to comment extends only to structures and relativities of fares and charges, and not to levels; and in commenting on reductions in services, TCBs should have regard to the effects which the maintenance of uneconomic services may have on BR's capacity to improve other services.

I am copying this letter to Private Secretaries to members of E(A), to members of L and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

ANDREW TURNBULL

Miss Dinah Nichols,  
Department of Transport

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CCNO

NBPM  
for

Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley  
Secretary of State for Transport  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1

30 November 1984

*Dear Nick,*

TRANSPORT BILL

I would not disagree with your minute of 13 November on the Transport Bill, but there are two brief points I would like to make.

First, with regard to the clause on reporting of accidents to railway staff, I strongly support a proposal to allow the Secretary of State for Transport to set by Order the basis for reporting accidents (in terms of number of days absence from work). However, in any public statement it is important not to pre-empt the advice I expect to receive early in 1985 from the Health and Safety Commission. They may propose a change in the reporting basis from 3 days to 7 days but this is not yet certain. At all events, it is important to have the clause so that railway accident reporting procedures can be aligned with those for the generality of industry in due course.

Second, a general point that is of interest to me in terms of my general responsibilities for the health and safety of workers. This is the frequency of violent assaults on public transport staff. I know that your Department has set up a working party on the matter, on which this Department is represented, and that it meets for the first time on 7 December. I would like to record that I see this as an issue that merits urgent attention and I am looking forward to seeing the conclusion of this group.

I am copying this to other members of E(A), to members of Land to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR  
NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department of Transport  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3EB

MB pm AT 23/11 CC NO  
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

22 November 1984

Dear Nick,

You sent me a copy of your minute of 13 November to the Prime Minister on proposals for inclusion in the Transport Bill.

The issue of PSV Driver Licensing and Railway Accident Reporting are covered by separate legislation in Northern Ireland and I will consider its amendment by way of Order in Council in the light of the detailed consideration of your proposals.

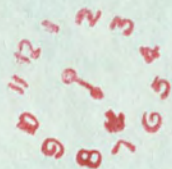
I am copying this to other members of E(A), and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

over,  
Douglas.



Parliament #13  
legislation

23 NOV 1984





From the Parliamentary Under Secretary  
of State for Trade and Industry

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DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
1-19 VICTORIA STREET  
LONDON SW1H 0ET

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The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley AMICE MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department of Transport  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON  
SW1 3EB

20 November 1984

*Dear Nick,*

#### TRANSPORT BILL

I am in general content with the proposals in your minute of 13 November. I have also seen Mr Turnbull's letter of 15 November conveying the Prime Ministers comments.

I support the proposals for using this opportunity to fulfil commitments to put the Transport Consumer Bodies on a similar basis to those for the other nationalised industries. This will be an important step towards completing implementation of the policy towards nationalised industry consumer councils set out in our 1982 "Strategy for Reform" Paper.

There is one outstanding point from the 1982 proposals which is not mentioned in your minute but about which I have been in touch with David Mitchell. This concerns provision for formal approval by the Government of guidelines for the activities of the Councils (in this case the Central Transport Consultative Committee). This would enable the Government to clarify in a reasonably flexible manner grey areas not easily dealt with by the statute itself. The proposals for guidelines in the 1982 Paper were widely welcomed and I am sure that a provision on these lines would not be controversial.

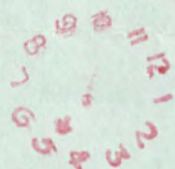
I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, to other members of E(A), to members of L and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours ever*  
*Lucas*

LORD LUCAS OF CHILWORTH

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