

Prime Minister

Housing

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The H paper referring to these proposals is attached. Mr Stanley is to meet the business managers on Thursday to discuss the position. Do you agree with Mr Mounts proposal at X?

1 February 1983

PRIME MINISTER

THE RIGHT TO REPAIR AND THE RIGHT TO BUY

A 1/2 Yes mt

At a meeting of H Committee last night, John Stanley produced a series of proposed amendments to the Housing and Building Control Bill. These received an extremely unfriendly response from Michael Jopling and John Biffen, who said that the Bill was already quite long enough without adding another dozen clauses. Business managers in the Lords were equally unfriendly, since the amendments would be exhaustively debated there if the Bill were guillotined in the Commons.

The proposals were remitted for negotiation between the business managers and John Stanley. He is fearful of being outgunned unless you step in.

Of the 8 proposals, all are desirable and all but one are likely to be the subject of amendments from the Opposition or from our own back-benchers. Two, I think, are particularly important and would do us considerable damage if dropped.

1. The Right to Repair. Labour have already tabled a new clause to give public and private sector tenants a right to repair. The SDP are similarly committed. If we vote down the Labour clause, we cannot plausibly promise to do better in the next Parliament - and we shall undo much of the good done by the tenants' charter.
2. Onerous Restrictive Covenants. As a result of the Norwich case, artificial delay by hostile authorities is much less of a serious obstruction to the right to buy. But the imposition of absurdly restrictive covenants is deterring many would-be buyers - and has left some who have already bought with properties which would be difficult to sell.

This is our last chance in this Parliament to follow up our great success in pushing through the right to buy. The chances are that if we miss this opportunity, there would be a considerable gap which would enable hostile authorities to reduce still further the effectiveness of the Right to Buy. We suggest that you might let the Home Secretary know of your concern that these two provisions at least should be added to the Bill.

X

FERDINAND MOUNT

fm



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

BOX



Personal

mt

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND  
CONSTRUCTION

February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1983.

Dear Prime Minister,

This is just a  
personal note to thank  
you very much indeed  
for your letter in  
support of some of  
my Housing Bill amendments.  
I have now got the  
ones you wanted!

Yours etc.  
John.