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At Stuart Sexton's lunch the other day, we talked at some length about the terms and conditions of employment for Special Advisers. Part of our concern was the issue of protection against and compensation for injury or death arising from terrorist action. In addition I raised another point about the inflexibility of present terms and conditions at election time, and set out to pursue the matter further. This letter is to discharge that commitment.

(cc attached)

2. As it happens, I find that the gist of my thoughts were set out in a letter I wrote to you on January 23rd, when I was concerned about the circumstances in which Special Advisers might have to work during the European Election campaign. The letter I wrote to you then applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to a possible general election campaign. It is best illustrated by looking at the standard letter of appointment, of which I attach an example in the form of paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Treasury's letter to me of June 1983. The particular problem arises in 11(b), which states that

(cc attached)

"An Adviser who wishes to take part in a general of by-election campaign, or to help in a Party Headquarters or research unit during such a campaign, must first resign his or her Civil Service appointment".

In my own case, I secured special clearance at the level of Sir Robert Armstrong for the 1983 campaign to permit me to attend Ministerial and other meetings at Central Office to the extent that these were needed to provide the support which Geoffrey Howe wanted me to provide both to his own role in the campaign, and to act more generally as an interpreter of the manifesto and of Government economic policy. However it is not difficult to see that on a strict construction of this paragraph in the standard letter, such a procedure might be questioned. In my view the minimum change needed, would be something on the lines of the

*in the standard
wording*

following:

".. and Adviser who wishes to campaign actively in a general election or by-election, or to work for a Party Headquarters or Research Unit during such a campaign, must first resign .."

Such a redrafting would leave it open to an adviser to discharge whatever duties his Minister might wish him to pursue, including any necessary degree of liaison with Central Office, while making it clear that he was in no way working for the Party Chairman, the Research Department or others in Central Office.

While it might be a bit much to formally change the contract of employment for each Adviser who is currently in post, I am still certain it would be worth effecting such a change for any new appointments henceforward. This is, of course, an issue which I shall in any case put to Peter Cropper shortly when he returns here.

Yours ever

Alan

A N RIDLEY

special

17th December, 1984

Thank you for your letter of 28th
November about the terms and conditions
of employment for Special Advisers.

I think we should talk about this as
soon as possible in the New Year. I
want to talk to David Wolfson here in
the meantime.

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

Adam Ridley, Esq