

PRIME MINISTER

FINANCIAL SERVICES BILL

You suggested below that the letters to Mr Mitchell and Mr Gould should be amended to include the point that if any matter about Lloyd's came to be included in the Financial Services Bill, a Minister other than Mr Howard would deal with the clauses concerned.

I wonder whether it would be right to include this point in the letters. To do so:-

- (1) would undercut the Government's line that it is quite proper for Mr Howard to deal with this Bill. To indicate, in advance, that there are certain matters which could arise under it with which he could not deal could well strengthen Opposition arguments that he should drop all responsibility for the Bill.
- (2) might further stimulate the Opposition to table clauses dealing with Lloyd's in the knowledge that a Minister other than Mr Howard (probably Mr Butcher) would deal with it.

None of this is to argue that the DTI should not make clear immediately a Lloyd's amendment is tabled that Mr Howard will not deal with it. But the disadvantages of doing this in advance look to be considerable.

I wonder therefore whether you might wish to sign the two letters as originally drafted?

N.L.W.

N L Wicks

11 February 1986