



Home Office

Lord Sharpe of Epsom OBE  
Parliamentary Under  
Secretary of State

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

**Admiral the Rt. Hon. Lord West of Spithead GCB DSC PC**

12 July 2023

Dear Lord West,

I strongly refute the criticisms expressed in your letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> July regarding the passage of the National Security Bill.

I take any suggestion that I have misled Parliament incredibly seriously and am clear that I have not. The engagement that has been conducted by the Security Minister and I has been done openly and in good faith and our wider collaborative effort has facilitated significant changes to strengthen the Bill in light of scrutiny from both Houses. I was therefore disappointed both by the tone of your letter and the allegations contained therein. While I acknowledge that we may not always see eye to eye, I am confident that at no point have I misled (deliberately or inadvertently) the House.

I will remind you that the Home Office, after engagement with Opposition parties, and the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC), conceded on a significant number of issues:

- We have been able to incorporate an amendment to ensure there is consideration of whether the ISC Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) should be revised given the size of change that the Bill represents to our approach to addressing some of the most serious threats to our country's prosperity and people;
- We narrowed the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme after significant engagement with the House and industry, ensuring only those who are directed by foreign powers have to register political influence arrangements;
- We amended the offences in Part 1 of the Bill to help address concerns on media freedoms; and,
- We altered our approach to the Serious Crime Act amendment to a defence after concerns were raised by you, and others.

This is not an exhaustive list, and it shows the lengths to which the Government has gone during the passage of this Bill to seek common ground with the ISC.

Completing the passage of the National Security Bill was a significant achievement, and I hope the addition of the amendment relating to the ISC MoU shows how seriously the Government took the concerns of the ISC on the matter of the MoU. I will place a copy of this letter in the House Library.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Sharpe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'A'.

**The Lord Sharpe of Epsom OBE**