

COVER NOTE

from : Secretariat

to : The Convention

Subject : Copy of a letter by M. P. Hain, member of the Convention to President Giscard d'Estaing concerning the Charter

Members of the Convention will find attached copy of a letter that M. Peter Hain, member of the Convention, has addressed to President Giscard d'Estaing.

Valery Giscard D'Estaing
President
Convention on the Future of Europe
Justus Lipsius
175 Rue de la Loi
1048 Brussels
Belgium

12 May 2003

Thank you for your welcome letter setting out how we might approach the challenges of the last few weeks of the Convention. I agree that your proposals will help us to make the best use of the short time we have left for our endeavours.

I hope you will forgive me for raising one point. Your letter suggests that it is now settled that the Charter should form Part II of the Constitution. As you know, our Government has always held the view that we could make no commitment to the incorporation of the Charter until we had sight of the whole package outlined in the recommendations of the Working Group.

The UK, with Denmark, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands and Sweden, set out a common position on this as recently as 14 April (Contrib. 659/03). We made it clear that we could not agree a specific method of incorporation without seeing the whole technical package. That remains the case, and I would therefore be most grateful if you could confirm the position set out by the Working Group, and endorsed by the Plenary, that decisions on the placement of the Charter will be taken after the additional work has been completed and agreed.

The challenge is to find ways to give our citizens legal certainty and clarity in relation to the Charter's ambiguous or conflicting texts. I hope and believe that a completed package from the Working Group may help us find an answer on the Charter's status on which we can all soon agree.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this to fellow members of the Convention.

Peter Hain
