



Cynulliad National  
Cenedlaethol Assembly for  
Cymru Wales

Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas  
Llywydd

Lord Elis-Thomas  
Presiding Officer

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Jim Barron  
Office of the Civil Service Commissioners  
35 Great Smith Street  
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5 February 2004

Dear Mr Barron

As you know, I am aware of the letter of 3 February which you received from Jon Shortridge, and of the attachments.

I have made it clear to the First Minister that I was very unhappy with his proposal not to accept the recommendation that Gerard Elias should be offered the post of Counsel General. I have grave concerns with any suggestion that Mr Elias is not suitable for appointment because of his membership of the Freemasons, or of the Independent Supervisory Authority on Hunting. Preventing a person from holding a public appointment because of his lawful private activities may even be a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights, as recent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights have suggested.

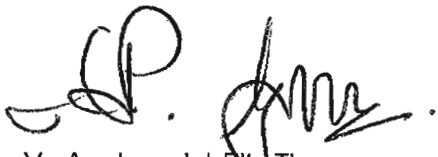
I have no reason to suppose that Mr Elias would not have the capacity to provide authoritative advice in matters of law, or to command the confidence of Assembly Members.

I would therefore suggest that the Commissioners should not accede to the First Minister's request.



I understand that the Commission will be meeting on Monday, but I hope to talk to Baroness Prashar before then.

Yours sincerely

*for*  *for* ; Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas  
Lord Elis-Thomas

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Dictated by the Presiding Officer and signed in his absence.