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Further objections to the European Human Rights Convention

I write to counter a slur cast on Mr Fred Silvester MP, by Lord De L'Isle of the Freedom Association. In his letter of 8 April 1980, Lord De L'Isle makes the unworthy suggestion that Mr Silvester's opposition to the European Convention on Human Rights is simply due to his apprehension, as a junior Employment Minister, of being caught *in flagrante delicto* by a forthcoming adverse decision under the Convention. That this suggestion is unfounded can be proved from your own columns. As long ago as 6 February 1978, you published a letter from Mr Silvester supporting one I had written¹ about the undemocratic nature of the Convention. Mr Silvester, who was then an Opposition back-bencher, said in the course of a lengthy, reasoned analysis that the Convention 'covers subjects of a highly political nature'. He went on: 'The great majority lie in an area which most people would regard as the proper business of Parliament or local councils rather than 13 unelected foreign judges'. All that Mr Silvester is guilty of is consistency.²

¹ Letter 18 above. See also Letter 19.

² *The Times*, 14 April 1980.