Letter to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters but reserves the right to edit correspondence. Letters should be sent to: Mr Robin Ellison, *Pensions*, Henry Stewart Publications, Museum House, 25 Museum Street, London WC1A 1JT, UK; Tel: +44 (0)20 7323 2916 ext. 101; e-mail: submissions@hspublications.co.uk

From Mr John Hayward

10th July, 2002

Dear Sir,

Journal of Pensions Management Volume 7, No. 4

I felt I could not let Steve Bee's otherwise excellent Editorial in the above edition pass without comment.

Steve's thoughts on complexity and simplification of UK pensions legislation concentrates almost exclusively on the Inland Revenue legislation and hardly mentions the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) side, which is equally complex and in dire need of simplification. What he has to say on the Inland Revenue side is, however, extremely apposite and well-founded. Nonetheless, I cannot let his remarks regarding the pensions industry not being to blame for the complexity and the responsibility lying with the Government and administrators pass without comment. Clearly there is blame and responsibility on the Government and on the Inland Revenue side, but the underlying nature of the legislation, being discretionary, has unfortunately encouraged the pensions industry to seek discretionary concessions here and there over many years, which has perpetuated complexity; no more so than in championing members' continued rights apparently at every opportunity. Fortunately, Steve Bee has seen the light on this perplexing issue with one of his three key principles to be adopted in future, ie 'Transition'. So please, do not blame the Government and Inland Revenue exclusively for something which the pensions industry also bears responsibility in part. May I finish by agreeing totally with Steve's 'Transition' proposals to abolish valuable rights attached to previous legislation. This is an absolute key to simplification and, as you know, one I have supported for a long time.

Yours sincerely,

John Hayward

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