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My ref: R/PSO/13207/87

Your ref:

30 APR 1987

The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw CHMC
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1

Dear Lonnie

NRM

COMMUNITY CHARGE: MARRIED AND UNMARRIED COUPLES

I have seen a copy of Quintin Hailsham's letter of 9 April to you on this subject.

In view of the importance that Quintin attaches to the point, I am willing to adopt the approach he suggested earlier. This will involve somewhat different rules for married and unmarried couples: in the former case, the burden of proof will be on the local authority to show that a couple lived together before marriage. I confirm that joint liability would, in any case, extend only to debts in so far as these were incurred after the couple started living together.

This is the approach I will adopt in the Bill. I may, however, need to return to the issue if there is criticism of these arrangements during the Bill's passage through Parliament.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor, members of E(LF) and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Thompson

Nicholas Ridley

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

Local Court

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