

CONFIDENTIAL



cc BC

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

12 November 1987

*Handwritten signature*

*NSM*

RATES REFORM BILL

You wrote on 9 November to say that Parliamentary Counsel had been making good progress with the Bill and that you now anticipated that it would be possible to introduce a Bill - albeit with the need for considerable subsequent amendment - during the first week of December. As you say, that would enable Second Reading to take place during the week beginning 14 December.

I have confirmed that Parliamentary Counsel share your assessment, and are aiming to have the Bill ready for Legislation Committee on 2 December. I should, however, register that they believe that this is the earliest possible date by which a Bill fit for introduction could be prepared.

This is much more promising news than we expected, and we must clearly press on as you propose. I therefore confirm on John Wakeham's behalf that he will be expecting the Bill at Legislation Committee on 2 December, with introduction immediately thereafter. That would enable Second Reading in the week beginning 14 December, and no doubt you will be discussing the precise timing with the business managers in the Commons.

I see from his letter to you of 6 November that Paul Channon is anxious about the incorporation of provisions on TSG and the abolition of the LRT levy in the Bill as introduced. My understanding, however, is that Parliamentary Counsel believe that it should be possible to have the provisions on LRT levy, at least, ready at the time of introduction. I hope that Paul will agree that this significantly reduces his problems.

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP

CONFIDENTIAL

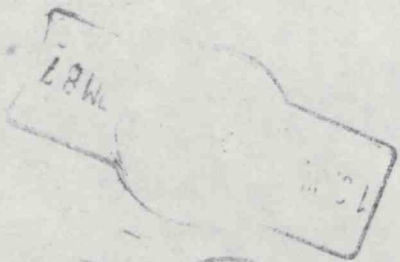
CONFIDENTIAL

*Local Govt  
tasks  
ITV*

As for the question of education pooling, on which you wrote to Kenneth Baker yesterday, I am advised that there is no reason to anticipate that this topic would be held to be outside the scope of the Bill, and thus incapable of being dealt with by amendment. But if there were any difficulty about this, then Kenneth's Education Bill would presumably provide an alternative vehicle.

I hope that this satisfactorily resolves all the points at issue and that a meeting will therefore not be necessary. But if there are any matters that remain outstanding, I would be quite happy to discuss them.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, the Secretaries of State for Wales, Education and Science, Scotland and Transport, the Lord Privy Seal, the Chief Whip First Parliamentary Counsel and Sir Robert Armstrong.



CONFIDENTIAL