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SCOTTISH OFFICE

WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

Note Spoke to Doc of Scottish Office private offices about the fact that this was covered in the post with my letter of the same date which outlined the PM's view. Told Scottish Office that if they still wished to pursue the point they should do so direct with Mr. Ridley.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley AMICE MP
Secretary of State for The Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON SW1

16 June 1988

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Dear Secretary of State

COMMUNITY CHARGE EXEMPTIONS: VOLUNTEERS

Malcolm Rifkind, who is ^{with PM?} at present in Scotland, has asked me to reply on his behalf to your minute of 14 June to the Prime Minister.

We continue to have serious reservations to the proposal that volunteers should be exempted from the community charge. Two particular aspects of what is now proposed cause us concern.

First, you suggest dropping the original proposal you made for an upper age limit. An exemption which was not confined to the more straightforward cases of young volunteers working for established organisations in the field would be a serious administrative burden. Secondly, we are seriously concerned on practical grounds about the proposal that there should be an income test - and even more so about the idea of adding a capital test. We do not think that it would be possible for registration officers in Scotland to establish the necessary procedure and collect the necessary information to enable this exemption to be put into operation in time for the establishment of the first registers in Scotland, on 1 October this year.

We therefore agree with your suggestion that an early meeting would be worthwhile.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and to the other recipients of your minute.

Yours sincerely
Ian Lang
(Private Secretary)

IAN LANG

Approved by the Minister of State
and signed on his behalf

